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Modern Business

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SALESMANSHIP AND SALES MANAGEMENT

BY

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MODERN BUSINESS

VOLUME 7

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PREFACE

In this Text it has been the author's aim to present the fundamental principles underlying the whole field of personal salesmanship, as revealed in the experience of a large number of successful salesmen.

There are three fundamental ideas upon which the Text rests, and I have sought as far as possible to have them stand out above all others. First, the prospect is not a victim to be sold something which he cannot use to advantage. Second, a sale is not a cold, scientific process, but a red-blooded, man-to-man transaction. Third, while a knowledge of the principles of salesmanship is necessary, the one way in which a man can improve his selling ability is to improve himself—to acquire strong, positive business qualities, to eliminate weak ones, and thus to acquire character, caliber and personality.

This is the first time, so far as I know, that any attempt has been made to formulate the principles underlying successful sales management in all its phases. Here, too, I wish to emphasize the fact that the problems of sales management are treated, not from the standpoint of getting the most out of salesmen, but from that of getting the best from them that they have to give. And the keynote of present-day sales management is the assumption by progressive sales man-

agers of the moral responsibility to develop the individual members of their sales organizations and thus to enlarge their individual earning capacities.

It is with the hope that I have succeeded in making clear some of the things enumerated above that this textbook on salesmanship and sales management is submitted to you.

Grateful acknowledgment is made of the valuable and unselfish labors of my friend and associate, Mr. Raymond J. Comyns, without whose assistance I should have been unable to complete this work in view of the exactions of my daily duties.

JOHN G. JONES.

New York.

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PART I

SALESMANSHIP

SALESMANSHIP

CHAPTER I

POWER OF PERSONAL SALESMANSHIP

1. *Importance of distribution.*—Distribution is today the most important single problem in practically every business. There was a time, not so many years ago, when production possibilities and limitations determined the growth of a business. The demand was for inventive genius that could devise new articles; and for machines that would produce such articles at a reasonable cost. In many cases where these things were available, the problem was to secure adequate financing to carry on production. In short, anything which could be produced could be sold.

Today, exactly the reverse is true. Anything which can be sold—for which there is a market, or for which a market can be created—can be produced. Reliance upon individual inventive genius has, to a large extent, given way to experimental departments, so called, manned by engineers, chemists and other technical men, to which can be referred the problem of devising a new article or a machine for producing it, with the calm assurance of a satisfactory result. The channels thru which outside financial aid can be

secured are fairly well defined; consequently the problem of securing adequate finances for the handling of a marketable article is fairly easy of solution. And while the financier's old-time question, "Can it be produced at a reasonable cost?" is still an important one, the larger question in his mind today is, "Can it be marketed in satisfactory volume at a profit?"

The problems of production and financing have given way in order of importance to those of distribution, or marketing.

2. *Salesmanship's place in field of marketing.*— We have observed that both advertising and personal salesmanship are subdivisions of the broader subject of marketing methods. It should be understood that advertising and personal salesmanship are not ordinarily to be looked upon as two separate and distinct methods of selling goods. Generally they constitute different parts of the same big marketing plan. The one supplements and helps the other; advertising shortens the salesman's labor by delivering part of his message—by making his firm and his product known and by creating a confidence in both in the mind of the prospect; and personal salesmanship makes the advertising campaign effective by turning the interest that has been aroused into actual orders.

3. *Relation of advertising and salesmanship.*— Any impression that advertising, as a general rule, eliminates the necessity for personal salesmanship is, of course, erroneous. Of the enormous sums of money spent each year for advertising, only an ex-

ceedingly small amount is spent on advertising designed to carry thru every development in a sale, and bring orders in response to the ad; and these advertisements are almost without exception confined to small space and to articles of low price.

With few exceptions, all newspaper and periodical advertising and the great bulk of direct-by-mail advertising must be followed up by an aggressive personal selling campaign, or by some substitute for a personal selling campaign, if the advertising campaign is to be effective, and if the interest aroused is to be turned into actual business for the advertised article. Any substitute for personal salesmanship at this point will inevitably lower the percentage of logical prospects or actual inquirers that are turned into customers. The catalog of the mail-order house does not secure the same volume of business from its recipients as it would if it were accompanied by a salesman's talk. The cost of personal correspondence as a substitute for the salesman's talk would be prohibitive; it would never be entered into unless it were begun by the prospect. The percentage of prospects turned into customers by a formal follow-up system, no matter how effective, must inevitably be smaller than it would be if those same prospects were interviewed in person. It is doubtful whether any method will ever be devised that will turn as high a percentage of prospects into customers, of inquiries into orders, as will personal salesmanship, irrespective of whether the article sold be widely advertised or not.

Furthermore, there is not the difference in selling cost that might be supposed between securing business by personal salesmanship and obtaining it by any of the other methods which are frequently substituted for salesmanship.

4. *Importance of personal salesmanship.*—Of the two subdivisions of the field of marketing methods—salesmanship and advertising—personal salesmanship must be looked upon as the more necessary. This relative importance must be recognized. The vast majority of business concerns spending large appropriations in national advertising today were firmly established as business successes before they entered into advertising campaigns of any appreciable size. Personal salesmanship with little or no assistance in the way of advertising placed them in a financial position where they could afford to advertise and further develop their business. This is true of the Eastman Kodak Company, the Burroughs Adding Machine Company, the National Cash Register Company, the Quaker Oats Company, the Northwestern Knitting Company and hosts of other enterprises. Today, of course, it has become quite common for a newly organized company to launch a big advertising campaign immediately, and this campaign, if effective, will very quickly establish a wide potential demand for the concern's product; but it is absolutely essential that the new concern have also an effective personal-selling campaign under way if it is to continue in existence. A newly established business can get along without

advertising, but it cannot get along without efficient personal salesmanship.

It should be understood that this discussion of advertising and salesmanship has been included only to establish their relation to each other and their relative importance. Salesmanship itself will be discussed here without regard to whether or not it supplements or is aided by an advertising campaign; the principles of salesmanship remain absolutely the same in either case.

5. *Merchandising machine.*—Merchandise moves so smoothly from the factory to the ultimate user that we cannot realize how complex is the business mechanism which makes the movement possible. A huge factory in Illinois, let us say, turns out farm implements for users who may live anywhere between Maine and California, or even in foreign countries. The Illinois manufacturer cannot very well sell hoes direct to the truck farmer in Mississippi. He sells his hoes to a jobber in Memphis who carries and distributes the stock of a number of manufacturers. The Memphis wholesaler sells, in turn, to a retailer in Meridian, Mississippi, who, since he is close in touch with the wants of the Mississippi farmer, carries stock drawn from wholesalers in Memphis, New Orleans, Mobile and Birmingham, and from manufacturers who sell to the retailers direct.

Year by year, new and better appliances take their places in the Meridian retailer's stock. One after another appear motor plows, seeding machines, cream

separators, milking machines and power churns, each offering the farmer the opportunity to do something that he could not do before or to perform some old task more efficiently. Each new article is produced in one or more plants and distributed over the whole country, and sometimes over the whole world. In the case of each, the wholesalers and the retailers have to be persuaded to stock up with the new and improved article, and must be taught how to sell it. This is the work of that part of the business organism known as the merchandising machine—the distributing or sales end of the business.

6. *Power furnished by the salesman.*—Salesmanship puts life and vitality into this mechanism, and makes the goods move. The manufacturer's salesman shows the wholesale dealer that he can resell the product at a profit. The salesman of the wholesaler does the same with the retail dealer. The retailer, in turn, paints pictures of better work done in less time and with less effort by means of the article offered, and so persuades the farmer to buy. The salesman, then, spreads the good news of how to get more and better goods for what one has to spend. The progress of civilization has meant, above everything else, that the use of the best material things has become more common. The genius of inventors and the daring of capitalists who backed them have resulted in modern mechanical processes for producing goods in large quantities. But these processes could never have been made to pay, nor would the cost of the ne-

cessities and comforts of life be as low as it is, if salesmanship had not provided the wide distribution that warrants the production of goods upon a vast scale.

7. *Vast influence of salesmanship.*—The salesman, then, is a vital influence in the commercial world of today. He connects the man who makes with the far-away man who uses. He is the apostle who spreads the gospel of good things, the universal use of which means the progress of civilization. Without the power that the salesman supplies to the merchandizing machine, the present processes of specialized and large-scale production and of world-wide exchange could not be carried on.

8. *Dignity of the salesman's work.*—These various sides of the work of the salesman must be seen in order that the importance and dignity of his place in the business world may be appreciated. A century ago it was not uncommon for inventors and other men of rare genius to die in the poorhouse. An inventor was without honor in his own generation; it took twenty-five or thirty years for the public to learn how to use his new article. Today the inventor turns his article over to the man who can show people their need for it, and soon a rising industry has grown up around the inventor's idea. The modern salesman accomplishes in a year what was formerly the work of a generation.

In his work, the salesman approaches men of various degrees of importance. He must possess the ability to talk to the small man without condescension; he must be able to meet the big man on his own

level. To this work he must bring a thoro knowledge of his goods and of the policies of his house, and a capacity for intelligent initiative. In the eyes of the men he meets, he is not merely his house's representative—he is the house itself.

9. *Demand versus supply of salesmen.*—A keen business man once said that there were two men who were of supreme importance to him; the man on the production end who could turn out the most goods at the lowest cost, and the man on the selling end who could sell the most goods at a fair profit. For every man who can sell successfully there are several who can direct production. The demand for salesmen, on the other hand, is larger than for production men. Every year numberless new articles must be introduced and made popular. New brands of old articles, too, must be placed upon the dealers' shelves; and staples must be distributed against most severe competition. The supply of men who are able to do this work will, in all probability, never equal the demand.

One has but to glance over the classified-advertising columns of a high-class daily paper to realize how insatiable is this demand. The man who can sell has a choice of connections and can start with a new concern at a rate of compensation extremely rare in other fields. It is quite unusual for the salesman to get into the "situation wanted" columns. Because of the large demand, there is no other field in business where a young man can get such a large return on his

personal force and character and where, without the possession of capital, he can play so important a part in the business world.

10. *Remuneration of salesmen.*—The compensation offered to salesmen depends largely upon the part which they play in creating a desire for their goods. The ticket-seller in a New York subway station can scarcely be called a salesman at all, for he merely passes out tickets and makes change. His compensation is low because the power to persuade and convince is not required of him. The big railroads, however, employ a corps of well-trained, well-paid salesmen to solicit passenger traffic for them; to sell tickets, in other words. The railroad ticket seller behind the wicket can inject real salesmanship into his job, too. Some time ago a ticket-seller for one of the big railroads, while visiting a large office on personal business, learned that ten of the office force were to be sent to Buffalo the following night. The firm had practically decided to send the men over a competing road. The ticket-seller immediately stepped into the breach, talked convincingly of the superior equipment on his road, and by promising his personal services in the matter of arrangements got the business for his railroad. Tho off duty, he went immediately to his company's office, secured and delivered the necessary tickets and carried away with him a check for over $100. That was salesmanship of a high order.

11. *Demand for retail salesmen.*—The old idea

that any one can sell behind a counter is fast giving way to a keen realization of the value of salesmanship in retail selling. Selling behind the counter is largely what the individual makes it. There are those who simply supply what is asked for, and that none too graciously; who do not take the trouble to study the line they are selling, and who give no thought to devising ways of increasing their sales. There is, on the other hand, a rapidly growing class who have made it a point to become thoroly acquainted with their goods; who by their frankness, courtesy and knowledge win the confidence of their customers and sometimes acquire a following. They give timely advice to their customers, and are able to sell a better class of goods than the customer intended to buy; they can close a sale when the customer is in doubt and plan methods of awakening interest in lines other than those the customer had in mind when he entered the store. The demand for this latter class is so great that the larger, more progressive retailers thruout the country are establishing training schools to develop this kind of salespeople.

The selling of cloaks and suits and of men's clothing at retail is supposed to require a higher order of salesmanship than the selling of smaller, lower-priced articles. The centering of desire on a particular garment and the closing of a sale is a difficult accomplishment. The compensation is correspondingly large. The selling of expensive furs and imported gowns calls for a still higher order of ability. Rug salesmen

in the higher class department stores regularly close sales running into three and four figures and are usually compensated on a commission basis. It is not uncommon for their compensation to go as high as three, four, or five thousand dollars a year. As we advance in the scale of retail selling, the discrepancy, as regards well-trained salesmen, between the demand and the supply increases, and remuneration increases in proportion.

12. *Salesmen who seek the buyer.*—We come next to the traveling salesman who goes to the buyer. Here we have first, the commercial traveler, representing a wholesale house and engaged in disposing of staples against strong competition. A man who can sell in this field is an asset to a firm; one who cannot is distinctly a liability. The demand for salesmen who will be an asset far exceeds the supply. Then, we have the final and highest type of salesman, the man who is selling a specialty for which an entirely new demand must be created. We must include here the promoter, who assembles and plans a new enterprise and interests capital in it. The demand for men capable of this creative salesmanship is practically unlimited. Compensation, therefore, is also unlimited. Men have been known to make a fortune in a single transaction; and it is not at all extraordinary for men of this type to earn from ten to fifty thousand dollars a year.

13. *Opportunities in salesmanship.*—A man who can sell will command several times the salary that he

could earn in routine or clerical work, or even in some important constructive work pertaining to production, accounts or finance. There are two main reasons for this. First, the executive head of a business is very likely to think of his sales department in terms of income and profits and of his other departments in terms of outgo and expense, and as a result, is likely to be more liberal in his plans for compensation in the sales department. Second, the actual worth to a firm of a man in any of these other fields cannot be accurately determined, but there is nothing uncertain about the worth of a salesman to his firm. It can be figured out in actual dollars and cents.

14. *What the salesman learns.*—Hugh Chalmers, who was formerly known as one of America's foremost salesmen, says that a man should always view his compensation from two angles. First, what can I earn? Second, what can I learn? From the latter point of view, salesmanship is especially attractive. The salesman comes into contact with a wide circle of business men. He acquires the ability to meet men and to address them. He gets a first-hand knowledge of the big business problem of distribution. He learns to observe the business methods of others. He develops poise and self-confidence. In short, he acquires the strong, positive qualities that make for success in business.

A great many big business executives began as salesmen. A personal knowledge of conditions on the firing line is invaluable to the man who is direct-

ing operations from a private office. The salesman, therefore, who takes advantage of every opportunity for becoming a broad-gauged business man is preparing himself for an executive position, either in the house for which he is selling or in a business of his own building. John North Willys came in from the road where he had been selling automobiles for another concern to establish the Willys-Overland Company of which he is the head today.

With all its opportunities, selling, as a great sales manager has put it, is the most fascinating game in the world; and it is a game of brain, pure and simple. It satisfies man's inherent love of a contest, which is inspired by the hazard of defeat and the chance of big victory. To sum up, the man who can sell *is* a success—others *may* be.

15. *Universality of selling.*—Salesmanship, in its broadest sense, is essentially the selling of one's point of view—the ability to start with the other fellow's point of view and to lead his mind to the viewpoint of the seller. When one individual endeavors to influence another to adopt a certain mental attitude or to act in a certain way, he is practising salesmanship. Every one can profit by a knowledge of the principles of salesmanship and of successful selling methods, using the terms in this broad sense.

Every one, at one time or another, sells his services. If we can present our qualifications in such a way as to convince the other fellow, we shall sell our services more surely, and possibly at a higher figure than if

we are uncertain in our methods. The accountant who would become a general auditor would do well to study salesmanship before presenting his proposition. The advertising manager must "sell" his board of directors on the efficacy of an advertising campaign; and "sell" them, too, on the necessity of an advertising appropriation. The shop superintendent who desires improved equipment in his plant must "sell" the board of directors. The corporation treasurer, when he goes to borrow funds, must "sell" the bank on his proposition. The great lawyer, pleading for a life before a jury, is simply trying to "sell" that jury his point of view. Even a great statesman might well be compared to a high-class specialty salesman. Every man, then, has a vital interest in that knowledge of the human mind and that practice of persuasion in which lies the essence of salesmanship.

16. *Selling ability not necessarily inherent.*—E. St. Elmo Lewis tells a story of a director of salesmen who was saying to him one day: "No, you can't teach a man salesmanship—it has to be born in him." The speaker had been watching one of his men in the front part of the store demonstrate a mechanical device. When the customer had gone he stepped quickly forward. "Bill," said he, "I notice that you did all the demonstrating and all the talking. Why didn't you let your prospect handle the machine—operate it? By letting him play with it, you would have held his interest and created in him a desire to own the machine. Instead of that, he walked out on you." He

had laid down a definite principle of salesmanship. This illustration serves to indicate what little thought the average business man is giving to the subject when he says that salesmen are born and cannot be made.

There is a great deal of discussion as to whether or not there is a science of salesmanship. We do not have to decide that question here. But even if we leave it entirely open, it is quite clear that we can apply scientific methods to the subject—in other words, we can approach the subject with an unbiased mind, delve into the experience of numerous men who have sold goods, and draw from that investigation certain fundamental principles. An art is defined as the practical application of knowledge or natural ability. In adding to our natural selling ability the knowledge of the principles of salesmanship that we have gathered by the scientific methods described, and applying those principles to the practice of selling, we are practising the art of salesmanship. We are then doing nothing more or less than adding to our own experience in the selling field the experience of other successful salesmen.

17. *Knowledge plus practice.*—The trained engineer, fresh from his technical school, is probably not so good a bridge-builder as the foreman who has worked at bridge-building since he was a boy. Give the engineer five years of experience, however, and he will be the better bridge-builder of the two, simply because he has at his disposal both his own experience and the experience of the entire engineering pro-

fession. The salesman, too, needs constant practice. He needs his own experience to tie to the experience of others. But while we emphasize the value of experience we must not under-emphasize the importance of instruction in principles. The mediocre man can be improved by instruction; the good man can be made better by instruction; and the best of men can be considerably strengthened by instruction. The great salesman who is born and not made is greater at forty than he was at twenty, because he is richer by twenty years of experience. A study of the principles of salesmanship will in a measure take the place of experience and thus shorten that period between twenty and forty, and bring the ambitious man more quickly to his goal.

REVIEW

Discuss the growing importance of the selling end of business.

Discuss the relation of personal salesmanship to the broader field of marketing and to advertising.

What is the salesman's influence?

Enumerate the opportunities of salesmanship.

Discuss the opportunities in retail selling.

Discuss the demand versus supply of salesmen.

Why is a knowledge of salesmanship valuable to those other than salesmen?

CHAPTER II

STAPLES, BRANDED STAPLES AND SPECIALTIES

1. *Divisions of selling.*—Selling activities may be classified from several different standpoints, each of them more or less important. One division may be made according to whether the goods are sold directly or the sale is made by means of a sample, a catalog or an oral description. Except in rare instances, goods are sold at retail by the first method. Bonds are usually sold by oral description. The traveling salesman, as a rule, sells by sample and sometimes, in the case of large technical appliances, by model. If models are not used in the latter case, the selling must necessarily be done by catalog.

Another division might be made according to the class of buyer, whether wholesaler, retailer or consumer.

2. *Where buyer seeks seller and vice versa.*—Then, we may make a third classification according to whether the buyer goes to the seller, or the seller goes to the buyer. Broadly speaking, most retail selling would be of the first kind, and most wholesale and specialty selling of the second.

It is not uncommon in the case of a specialty for the buyer to take the initiative and go to the seller. Pro-

gressive retailers of foodstuffs, on the other hand, frequently take the initiative these days in going to the buyer by soliciting orders over the telephone. Buyers of women's apparel go to the seller when they make their yearly visits to Paris for their importations. New York lace houses have salesmen traveling over the country calling on lace buyers. Twice a year, however, the salesmen are called into New York for a month to meet these same buyers who have come to New York to look over what the metropolis has to offer and to get their stock of spring or fall fashions. As a matter of fact, it is at this time that the largest part of the business is done. The intermediate visits of the salesmen to the distant buyers merely serve to keep the buyers stocked up and supplied with new styles between their visits to New York.

3. *Single versus repeated sales.*—A better defined division of the selling activities is made according to whether the salesman sells a man once or sells him repeatedly and regularly. A salesman handling store fixtures would come under the first subdivision, while a grocery salesman calling upon his trade regularly would come under the second. It is quite possible, of course, that the fixture man might make sales to the same man on several different occasions, but these sales would be at long and irregular intervals. He is therefore under the necessity of seeing new people constantly in order to keep going.

This classification is more important than the previous ones, because it is one that may well be consid-

ered by the salesman in making a connection. Where one sells a man but once, it is important to get his friendship and confidence quickly, which means that the salesman must have a personality that makes a quick impression. The most important requirement, on the other hand, in a representative who calls on trade regularly, is that he shall have a personality with lasting qualities. Whether he can "get under a man's skin" quickly is of secondary importance. Salesmen and sales managers may well bear this distinction in mind.

4. *Staples and specialties.*—By far the most important classification of selling is that based on the nature of the commodity sold; namely, whether it be a staple or a specialty. A staple may be defined as a commodity necessary to the carrying on of the primary functions of living, under existing standards. Sugar, coffee, cotton goods and shoes are staples. Since there is a universal demand for such commodities, it is not required of the salesman to create a demand before the sale can be made.

A specialty may be defined as an article for which there may exist a potential demand or for which it is possible to create a demand, but which has not been generally incorporated into the people's daily life. Phonographs, conducted tours and automobiles are examples of specialties. People must be educated to demand these things and a desire for them must be created in each individual sale. It might be noted in passing that automobiles are just becoming staple as

regards people who can afford to purchase and maintain them and for those who use them in a business way.

5. *Selling specialties.*—As the definitions would indicate, the bulk of the expenditures of the country's households are for staples. Many households and individuals, however, have a surplus left after they have satisfied their requirements for staple goods. With the advance of prosperity, this surplus grows larger.

The sellers of specialties compete keenly for this surplus. The competition, in the case of the goods themselves, is not only between two similar specialties, such as two different makes of player-pianos, but between different kinds of specialties as well; if the surplus is spent for an automobile, consideration of the player-piano will be put off for a year. Because of this double competition and because of the necessity of creating a compelling desire and making a strong close in each individual case, the specialty salesman must be of a high type and earns a correspondingly large remuneration.

6. *Specialties become staples.*—A great many of the staples of today were the specialties of yesterday. Adam Smith says that in 1775 both men and women in England wore shoes; in Scotland, only men wore them; and in France, neither men nor women wore them. In England, then, shoes were a staple commodity; in Scotland, they were staple among men, but a specialty among women; and in France, they were

a specialty for both men and women. That is, there existed no demand for them among the women of Scotland, or among the men or women of France. The people had to be educated to their use; a fairly general desire for shoes had to be created. Even such common articles as toothbrushes, soap and underclothing have not always been staples, and they are staples today only in the more civilized countries. Their introduction in some foreign parts is only beginning.

There may be some who will maintain that goods are not manufactured before there is a demand for them, but are produced only in response to a very definite need. Those who have studied the history of selling, however, realize that the demand has to be manufactured just as surely as do the goods. For a long time railroad men laughed at Westinghouse and his air-brakes with which he proposed to stop trains with wind. A Boston mob destroyed the first sewing machine on the ground that it would throw the people out of work. It took a long campaign of education to convince people that Edison's electric lights were safe, practical, and better than gas. The struggle of the telephone for recognition is still fresh in the minds of men of this generation. No business man can now imagine how he could get along without a telephone, but it took real salesmanship to convince him in the early days that there was any advantage connected with it. It is said that one of the first Chicago firms to install telephones subsequently had them removed

because the frequent phone calls from customers disturbed the clerks.

The process by which a specialty becomes staple goes on continually. In the next few years we may expect to see the vacuum cleaner just as common as the sewing machine is today. The low-price automobile, too, bids fair to become a staple product. The milestones of civilization are marked by the conversion of specialties into staples thru the educating work of salesmen and of advertising. The degrees of civilization in two countries may be compared by noting to what extent things that have become staples in the one are still specialties in the other.

7. *Branded staples.*—In the classification which we are now discussing, that is marked by the nature of the product sold, there is a third class of commodity to be considered, the branded staple. The branded staple may be defined as a staple commodity, put up in a standard package, under a distinctive brand name, usually sold at a standard price, carrying a guarantee of quality and in many cases widely advertised. Not so many years ago the corner grocer bought his oatmeal and other cereals in bulk and scooped them from a bin under his counter for his customers. Today he hands the customer a package. Formerly he bought his crackers by the barrel. Today the National Biscuit Company and the Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company have largely wiped out the sale of crackers in bulk and instituted the sale of crackers in sealed packages. Flour, too, was for-

merly weighed out from the grocer's bin. Today it is handed to the customer in the bags in which the grocer receives it, branded with the maker's name.

This tendency toward the production of branded staples is one of the most marked features of modern business. Coffee, tho still largely sold in bulk, is fast being put into the branded staple class by the Arbuckles and others. The American Sugar Refining Company has made popular the sale and assured the prestige of both block and granulated sugar in packages. Men no longer ask for socks; they call for Holeproof Hosiery or Onyx or some other brand. They ask for shirts under a brand name that assures their fulness, cut and quality. Clothing, shoes and hats are fast coming to be bought in the same way.

8. *Branded staple and the salesman.*—Altho the principal credit for the prestige of the branded staple must be given to national advertising, there are some interesting problems of personal selling in connection with branded staples. The brand imparts to what has been a purely staple product something of the nature of a specialty. New brands must compete with other brands which have been established previously, with jobbers' private brands, and with the old bulk goods, which have the advantage of price. In the face of this condition, the new brand must be established by the joint work of advertising and personal salesmanship. Advertising aims to divert the existing demand of the ultimate consumer to this particular brand. The salesman is depended upon to

win and educate the jobber and the retailer. Since it is important that the brands get fair distribution in order to profit by the advertising, and since the jobber and the retailer are loath to stock up until they have felt the actual demand, a high order of selling ability is necessary in the early stages.

Sometimes the need for creative salesmanship is lessened as a brand becomes established with the public. A constant public demand, kept alive by national advertising, makes it necessary for jobbers and retailers to carry the branded staple, and it keeps moving more or less automatically thru the channels of trade. The distribution efforts are likely to be confined largely to advertising, which reaches beyond the jobber and retailer to the ultimate user of the goods. The man selling an established branded staple must watch himself carefully lest he deteriorate into a mere taker of orders.

9. *Selling staples.*—The difficulty of specialty selling and the problems to be met in selling branded staples have been discussed, and it has been shown that the selling of pure staples is likely to be simpler. It should be borne in mind, however, that staple selling now requires more real salesmanship than in former days, when competition was less keen. Let us take the wholesale grocery salesman as a typical distributor of staple products. A generation ago, retail grocers in most communities were called upon by the representatives of not more than two or three wholesale grocery firms. The retailer divided his business

among these few competitors and kept them all happy. Moreover, in case of a pinch, the wholesale-grocery salesman was usually able to offer price concessions. Today that same retailer is called upon by twenty or thirty wholesale-grocery salesmen. They all sell about the same product at about the same prices and price-cutting is fairly well eliminated. This illustration is fairly typical of the tendency in all staple lines. To get business in paying quantities under these conditions, and to increase that business from year to year, requires selling ability of a high order.

10. *Factors in a sale.*—There are three factors in every sale: the buyer, the seller and the commodity. Having seen into what classes the commodity may fall, we are ready to consider methods of reaching and appealing to the buyer; to analyze the seller and determine what qualifications he must possess and acquire if he is to be successful; and to consider ways of building an effective selling talk and demonstration for the particular commodity he is to sell.

REVIEW

Enumerate and discuss briefly the divisions that may be made of selling work from different viewpoints.

Distinguish between the terms staple and specialty.

Discuss the branded staple and the conditions under which it is usually sold.

CHAPTER III

SELLING PROCESS—PRELIMINARY TO THE INTERVIEW

1. *Definition of a sale.*—From a legal point of view, to sell is to transfer property to another, or to contract to do so, for a valuable consideration, especially money. From a business point of view, the sale should, in addition, represent a profit to the owner of the goods. Not much salesmanship is required to give goods away or to sell below cost.

There is still another requisite. A sale, as a legitimate phase of commerce, should represent a profit or an advantage to the buyer. Some treatises on selling would lead one to believe that the average buyer is a putty-minded person before whom the scientifically instructed salesman makes a few mysterious passes and thus hypnotizes him into signing an order whether he can use the commodity to advantage or not. The reminiscences of some salesmen would almost lead one to believe that most of their sales are made thru a system of legerdemain in which no consideration whatever is given to the question whether or not the buyer can use the goods to advantage. One wonders how men who are so easily persuaded to make disadvantageous purchases ever become sufficiently successful to be able

to buy anything. Of course, the truth is that the salesman has really taken the buyer's point of view, and, consciously or unconsciously, has made the buyer see that it is to his advantage to buy.

It is recognized today to be both poor ethics and bad business to sell a person anything that he cannot use to advantage; and most salesmen realize that to overstock a dealer, altho it may show fine powers of persuasion, will do no permanent good to himself, his customer or his house. A true sale, then, is one in which there is a threefold profit—to the house, to the buyer and to the seller.

2. *Development of a sale.*—In the development of the selling process, there are four distinct stages. First, the salesman must secure the prospect's undivided attention. Second, this attention must be sustained and developed into interest. Third, this interest must be ripened into desire. And fourth, all lingering doubts must be removed from the prospect's mind, and there must be implanted there a firm resolution to buy; in other words, the sale must be closed. In every successful sale there is another element, confidence. Unlike the four elements previously mentioned, confidence does not develop into another distinct phase of the selling process. It is rather the base made stronger by the interview upon which the completed sale must be built.

Before a sale is possible, the buyer must be approached. The approach, then, tho not an integral part of the selling process, is a necessary and difficult

preliminary. It may be divided into two parts: preparation for the interview, accomplished by securing a knowledge of the prospect; and getting in to see the prospect. To keep these various elements in mind is necessary to an intelligent study of the subject of salesmanship. It is even more important in the actual making of a sale.

3. *Preparation for the interview.*—Many salesmen open their interviews smoothly by approaching a prospect on his "blind side"; that is, by talking to him of something in which he is deeply interested. Even tho a salesman has a standard presentation, he will find it advantageous to modify it or add to it, if necessary, in such a manner as to tie his proposition closely to the prospect's interests. In other words, the salesman's talk must be suited to the prospect. This means that he should know as much as possible about the prospect before approaching him. The astute salesman gathers a great deal of valuable information before he ever faces his prospect, just as the general provides himself with topographical maps of the country over which his army is to operate. Oftentimes, a great part of his knowledge must be secured by scrutinizing his man as he crosses the office floor. He will secure some knowledge during the interview, of course, by getting the prospect to talk.

4. *Studying the prospect.*—Some men are opposed to change; others welcome new things. The college graduate's viewpoint is different from that of the self-trained man. One prospect is young and am-

bitious to progress; another is getting old and is thinking of retiring. One is wealthy and lives modestly; another owns a large house and drives a car. One plays golf; another is a tennis enthusiast or a baseball "fan." The nature of your individual business will dictate just what particular information you most desire. Bear in mind that after this information is secured it will, in nine cases out of ten, be better not to let the prospect know that you are in possession of it, but to get him to talk with you as freely as he will.

Let us take a few examples. A representative of a New York publishing house was sent to induce the president of a great university to write a book. He immediately read the last book written by the educator. His opening remark then, when he called, was: "It is a pleasure to meet you. I have just completed the reading of your latest book." That put the interview upon a favorable footing immediately.

A salesman calling upon an advertising manager whose firm's initial page in the *Saturday Evening Post* had appeared two weeks previously, immediately proceeded to congratulate the advertising manager upon having broken into the *Post,* and commented upon the forcefulness of the copy used. It goes without saying that an advertising manager is proud of his first $5,000 page.

An insurance man had learned two things about one of his prospects; he was hostile to insurance, and he had a son and a daughter at college. By talking specifically of the financial future of that particular

son and daughter, instead of generally of the necessity of providing for one's family, he was able to remove the hostility.

A high-class salesman who does business with railroad presidents makes it a point to be thoroly familiar with the railroad's latest annual report and especially with the features that show marked gains.

A man who places exclusive agencies for a hardware specialty makes a practice of buying a key-ring in each of the three or four hardware stores in a town. While he is being waited upon, he has an opportunity of looking around and getting a pretty definite impression. He then goes to the store that impressed him as being the best and offers the agency.

5. *Gathering information.*—The human mind is so constituted that it hesitates to center itself upon a new subject unless that subject is manifestly one of personal interest. Previous knowledge of a prospect enables the salesman to inject this element of personal interest. His information is garnered from many sources. Other salesmen can give him a great deal. In small towns, the hotel clerks are able to tell him much. Men to whom he has sold can inform him about the men he is going to see. This gathering of information from their customers is a favorite method with specialty men, some of whom make it a rule to question every man they call upon concerning some other man or business in town. The man who buys staples generally knows the men who carry the same line in adjoining towns and, as they are not com-

petitors, will give unbiased information concerning them. Newspapers frequently contain valuable references to the business men of a community. The telephone directories and general directories are unfailing sources of information. The salesman should consider this gathering of information as an important part of his work. He should be continually on the lookout for anything that will enable him to get a favorable opening, that will be a buffer against the shock of the contact of two minds, or that will establish a point of contact with his prospect.

6. *Using a card-index.*—What has been said applies primarily to the first interview. Unless the salesman sees his customers regularly and at short intervals, however, they will seem like new prospects every time he calls upon them. A salesman who calls upon his customer only once in three or four months and depends upon his memory for the essential facts concerning him and his business, is likely to forget important details. For that reason, a salesman often keeps a simple card-record of each customer. Upon each card he keeps a note of the man's financial standing, the business that has been done with him and items of personal information gained during the various interviews. He goes over these cards before each call.

7. *Securing an interview.*—A salesman who had sent his name in to a large buyer received the reply that the buyer did not wish to see him. "Tell your boss," he quickly instructed the office boy, "that I already knew he didn't want to see me; it is I who wish

to see him"; and the story goes that he saw him. If he did, he accomplished an important thing; for it is not until he has been able to get face to face with his prospect, that the salesman's appearance, personality, knowledge of his goods, or the best talking point he may have at his tongue's end, can do any good.

There is little trouble, of course, in getting access to the proprietor of the small retail store. It is seldom that any difficulty is experienced in getting an interview with any man in the average manufacturing concerns in the smaller cities. A great many of the largest concerns and of the largest men, too, make it a point to see that every salesman is received courteously and given an audience.

In a great many cases where the formality of giving your name to an office boy or telephone operator must be gone thru, the invariable answer of the business man to the operator's "Mr. Blank to see you" is "Tell him to come right in." The average man's natural curiosity, coupled with his aversion to walking outside to see you, will prompt that reply. Let us realize, then, that the salesman sometimes conjures in his mind's eye difficulties of getting in which do not exist.

8. *Men hard to see.*—Many business men, however, whose various interviews during the day make great inroads on their time, and who must provide for other matters, feel obliged to hedge themselves about with guards of one kind or another—to erect barriers against those who would intrude. This should not be taken to indicate that they have no desire to look into

a worth-while proposition. They expect a salesman with a proposition worthy of their attention to be big enough and ingenious enough to make his way past these obstacles. If the salesman asking for an interview is not firmly convinced that his proposition is in that class he has no right to be there.

Now, there are a few men—a very few—who are very hard to see. A salesman must then apply himself to finding a way of getting in instead of sitting back and proving to himself that it is impossible. Should he finally decide that he cannot gain an interview, he may be obliged to see some other fellow in the same line come along, get in and make the sale. It should be remembered, always, that there are some men who are getting in, that there are some men from whom the prospect is buying. Be one of them.

9. *Tactics to be avoided.*—It is important that the salesman not only secure his audience, but also that he secure it on a right basis. A busy man could be dragged out of an important directors' meeting by a sufficiently urgent message; but if, having come out, he discovers that his caller's business is not of the immediate importance to him that the message indicated, he will resent the occurrence so much that to do business with him will be an impossibility.

The hackneyed and overworked "personal matter" method should be avoided. No matter is personal from the point of view of the prospective purchaser. The simple, dignified formula: "Tell Mr. Jones that Mr. Brown is here to see him" is probably the best, as

a usual thing. Then if the nature of the business is asked for, several avenues are open. A very successful salesman uses the method of asking the telephone operator to connect him with the man he wishes to see. He is thus enabled to get in a short, pithy talk ending with "Now I just want to step in there for a few minutes. May I?"

A young fellow soliciting advertising for a lumber journal used to work out original ways of stating his business by writing a message on his card. In response to the request of a large hardware store's advertising manager to know his business, he wrote: "Do you know how much crayon the southern lumber mills use every month to mark lumber?" He was prepared, of course, to show the advertising manager that the concern's sales of crayon alone would warrant the advertising. A man may be original in stating his business, or he may avoid having to state it; but directly to mislead his prospect concerning it or to exaggerate its importance will not start him on the road toward a sale.

Courteous persistence gains many an interview, and on a favorable basis, for the average prospect feels rather ashamed of continually turning a man down without a hearing. The salesman will find that it is very often possible to reach a man over the telephone when he cannot be reached in person in his office.

10. *Advantages of using the telephone.*—The ability to use the telephone effectively becomes increasingly important to the salesman with each pass-

ing day. In all business transactions requiring one business man to call upon another, it is becoming more and more common practice for a man to phone beforehand, in order that he may by this method both avoid wasting his own time and save the time of the other man. The effective use of the telephone by the salesman, especially in work in a big city, will save him a great deal of unproductive "leg" work and will enable him to use productively a larger percentage of his prospect-seeing time. Such a method of work will help him to arrange all of his day in such a way that he may be reasonably sure that he can use the greater part of it in actually seeing prospects. Thus he can eliminate to a great degree calling upon men who are out of their offices or who are so busily engaged as to be unable to see him. Furthermore, a previous appointment over the phone will enable the salesman to introduce himself in the outer office by saying: "Will you please tell Mr. Prospect that Mr. Salesman is here to see him? I have an appointment with Mr. Prospect at this time today."

The use of the telephone by the salesman in securing appointments and assuring himself of audiences with his prospects is, however, rather a neglected art. This method has not been given the same careful study and planning as has been accorded other methods of getting in to see prospects. Consequently, the telephone has too often been used only as a last resort; seldom when it was at all possible to reach the prospect without making an appointment. This feeling has

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been so strong that in the past some houses have issued instructions to their salesmen never to attempt to transact any business over the phone because of the disadvantage at which this method placed them. The salesman should give the use of the telephone the same careful study that he gives to the presentation of his proposition; and if he does this he will find he has developed one more method of increasing his efficiency.

11. *How to use the telephone effectively.*—The salesman's talk over the phone must be carefully planned so as to dominate the entire conversation, to be strong in positive suggestion, to stick strictly to the subject that he is striving to emphasize and to leave little or nothing to the prospect's deliberation. To show just exactly what we mean, we will give a more or less typical phone conversation between salesman and prospect, supposing that the salesman is arranging for an appointment.

"Mr. Prospect, this is Mr. Salesman of Blank and Blank calling. I have a business proposition I wish to talk over with you. What is the most convenient time of day to see you? If I call between ten and eleven this morning, will you be in your office?"

It will be noticed that this question calls for the simple answer yes or no. If the answer is yes, the salesman should come back with: "All right, I will see you at that time," terminate the interview as quickly as he can with courtesy, and hang up the receiver.

If the answer is no, he should suggest a different time for the interview, in some such way as this:

"Well, would some time between two and three this afternoon be better for you?"

The salesman should always suggest the time of the appointment, in order to leave as little as possible to the prospect's decision. He will thus prevent the delay that would result from the prospect's deliberation as to the time that would be convenient to him. In other words, the question suggesting a definite time is strong in positive suggestion.

There is another way, of course, in which the prospect may reply: "Well, Mr. Salesman, what is it that you wish to see me about?" This question should be given some such answer as, "Well, we will let that go until I see you, Mr. Prospect," or, "I'll tell you about that when I call." This is best said half laughingly and should be closely followed up with, "Let me drop in and have a little talk with you some time today, Mr. Prospect—shall we say, about 2.30 this afternoon?"

The principle here is that the phone conversation must be held strictly to the purpose that the salesman desires it to accomplish. He should bear in mind that he is striving merely for an appointment and should not by any chance, allow the conversation to become a presentation of his proposition. He should always be prepared with some such remark as, "Seriously, Mr. Prospect, I don't think it would be possible for us to discuss my proposition satisfactorily over the phone, and I do want to sit down with you at your desk for a few minutes. Will you be at your office

this afternoon?" He should always bring the conversation back to a definite suggestion for an appointment, for he will thus place the prospect in a position where he must eventually either agree to an interview or refuse pointblank to see the salesman. In neglect of this point lies the weakness of most salesmen's efforts to secure appointments over the phone; and it explains why many houses discourage their salesmen from using the phone. Unless specific conditions warrant such a method, the salesman who endeavors to present his proposition to a prospect over the phone is at a serious disadvantage. It is much easier for the prospect to turn the salesman down without an adequate hearing under such circumstances than it would be if the two were face to face.

Furthermore, the presentation of the salesman is usually designed to appeal to the sight as well as to the hearing of the prospect—the salesman's oral statements are visualized and illustrated by samples or equipment, and the opportunity to use this part of the selling appeal is, of course, lost if there is no personal interview.

12. *Disadvantage of too definite appointments.*—There is one disadvantage connected with definite appointments, unless they come the first thing in the morning, or possibly the first thing in the afternoon. Some of the salesman's time that could be used to advantage must inevitably be wasted. For example, let us say that a salesman in presenting his proposition usually spends anywhere from twenty minutes to two

hours with a prospect. Let us further suppose that he has completed an interview with one prospect at 9.30 A. M. and has an appointment with another at 10 o'clock. He will hesitate to call on a third prospect between 9.30 and 10, even in the same neighborhood, for fear of having to run away in the middle of that interview to keep his 10 o'clock appointment. Consequently, he wastes a half hour. Two or three situations like this in a day would seriously interfere with steady, effective work. Furthermore, the salesman cannot arrange his definite appointments closely together without uncertainty as to his ability to keep them punctually. It is suggested, therefore, that except for the first thing in the morning and possibly the first thing in the afternoon, the salesman avoid making definite, on-the-minute appointments whenever possible, and rather make appointments in the manner suggested above—that is, "between nine and ten," "between two and three," or, "some time this afternoon." Few men who are going to be in their offices anyhow will insist that the hour be more specific.

13. *Use of business card.*—As a usual thing, it is unwise to send a card in by an office boy, or to hand it to the operator to be read over the phone. The prospect very likely reads the card, comes to an adverse decision and determines not to see the salesman. The same principle applies here as to a telephone presentation; it is much easier for a prospect to turn down a salesman when he knows the latter's business without meeting him face to face. For the same reason, if the

man is out or unable to see the salesman, it is usually not a good plan for the latter to leave behind any statement of his business. It is to the salesman's advantage to have a clear field on his next call. The application of these principles depends to some extent, of course, upon the individual product sold.

14. *Dignified bearing in outer office.*—The salesman, in giving his name to the office boy, telephone operator, or the guardian at the outer gates of a large plant, should be just as careful of his methods and his conduct as if he were in the presence of the big man he is endeavoring to see. For there is but one answer to that oft-repeated question, How can I get by these people? and that is, Caliber. These subordinates each day are seeing a large number of callers who wish to meet some member of the organization. Most of the visitors are ordinary fellows who do not seem to demand much deference and consequently do not get it. It is the real salesman's duty to impress these employes with the fact that he is someone whose dignity and importance entitle him to an audience. If he succeeds in making such an impression, there will be noticed a difference in the tone in which they will announce him, if not in the actual words. And it will make a great deal of difference whether the announcement is: "There is a man here to see you"; or, "A gentleman, Mr. Blank, is here to see you."

15. *Office etiquet.*—Someone has suggested that in a book on salesmanship such as this there should be a chapter on office etiquet that would point out what

a salesman should and should not do upon entering an office and while he remains there. Such a chapter is deemed unnecessary, because the same rules, dictated by good breeding, which obtain in all our relations with our fellow-men, apply here. True courtesy is based upon a sincere consideration for others and a real regard for the comfort of those with whom we come in contact. There is innate in every man of fine feeling who is endeavoring to make himself a true gentleman, a perception of the courteous thing to do in every situation, and the true salesman will follow this instinct.

If one were to meet in an office a woman whom he knew socially, he would instinctively remove his hat while talking to her. There is no reason why a salesman talking to a telephone operator in the outer office should not do the same. One does not ordinarily enter the house of a social acquaintance smoking a cigarette or a cigar. Neither, then, should a salesman enter a prospect's reception room or private office smoking. He should not, of course, begin smoking in an office unless he is invited to do so. Nor is it courteous to ask permission to smoke, except when circumstances indicate very clearly that the prospect will not have the slightest objection—and even then there is little reason for the request. One does not place his feet on the rungs of chairs or other furniture when visiting socially, and a salesman should be extremely careful not to offend by doing so in an office.

The reception room of a business office during the business day is neither the place nor the time for

merry banter between the salesman and the telephone operator; but this does not imply that a courteous and helpful friendship may not spring up between the attendant in the outer office and the salesman who visits that office repeatedly. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that no discourteous or ill-bred act has any place in salesmanship. The transgression of this rule is the reason for the failure of the loud talker, and of the salesman who thinks he is irresistibly clever or humorous, or who familiarly "sisters" and "brothers" those in the outer office on too short acquaintance. His actions are in violation of good taste and are resented even by those who would be likely to employ the same tactics if they were in his place.

The trouble is that some salesmen confuse discourtesy with forcefulness. The salesman's every remark and every move should have for its object the advancement of his cause, but he should not make the mistake of thinking that this calls for any behavior that is not entirely courteous. It is possible to insist, yet with all politeness, that one's message be delivered to the prospect. A salesman may place his chair and his equipment so as to make all conditions favorable to a presentation of his proposition without in the least transgressing the rules and principles of courtesy.

16. *Securing favorable conditions for interview.*— In the sale of most commodities, the salesman should realize that he has not accomplished his task of getting at the buyer if the latter merely comes out and talks

to him as both stand in the reception room. A man standing up feels uncomfortable and is scarcely in a position to give his best attention. Furthermore, under such circumstances the handling of any equipment that the salesman may carry is likely to be awkward. After a few terse remarks calculated to arouse the prospect's interest, the direct positive suggestion should be made: "Now, let us step in, sit down at your desk and go over this briefly."

It is to the salesman's advantage to discover whether or not there is any best time to see his prospect and, if there is, to call at that time. Some concerns have regular hours for seeing salesmen in certain lines. It is politic to call during those hours, unless there is some good reason for calling at another time.

17. *Cooperation in reaching the prospect.*—There is nothing more valuable to the salesman than cooperation—cooperation of customers, friends and even of other salesmen. It is especially valuable in the matter of getting interviews. It makes the securing of an interview under favorable auspices a simple matter even in the case of those who are the most difficult to see. The prospect is prepared to give an interested hearing to the salesman's whole story out of courtesy to the friend who sent him. Then, too, the fact that he has come recommended, has created confidence in him.

The live salesman, particularly in specialty lines, is continually on the lookout for helps of this sort, for they represent to him the lines of least resistance. As

he goes from town to town, he picks up here and there a card of introduction from some brother salesman to one of that salesman's particularly intimate customers. He secures letters of introduction and of commendation of his proposition as he goes from one town to another and from one man to another. He secures from every man to whom he sells, the names of some friends who are likely to be interested prospects. The best possible source of prospects for an automobile salesman is the man who has bought a car, is enthusiastic about it, has been boosting it to the people he knows, and is sufficiently friendly with the salesman to tell him who among his friends are considering purchasing cars or who could afford to do so. The salesman then secures definite permission to use this customer's name with these new prospects. An introduction like the following gives him a strong entering wedge: "I interested your friend, Mr. Brown, in my propositon yesterday and he suggested that I should see you before I left town." He approaches from another angle by getting the man he has just sold to telephone any friends who are possible prospects and tell them that he is coming. He is careful, in using this latter method, to make sure that his customer who is thus cooperating does not endeavor to give the friend a selling talk over the phone, but that he merely announces that the salesman is going to drop in. Cooperation of this kind enables the salesman to occupy his time in seeing prospects and not in seeking them.

18. *Individuality in announcing oneself.*—The large department stores of New York and Chicago have very rigid rules as to how salesmen who call at their stores shall announce themselves and at what time they shall be seen. As practically every house in every line has one of its men call on these stores, the number of salesmen calling during the day is enormous. A rather arbitrary selection is made of those who shall be seen; comparatively few reach the buyers of their lines. The question of how to proceed to secure an audience under these circumstances was frequently brought up in the author's lecture courses by salesmen who were meeting these conditions every day. In consequence, the merchandising man of one of the largest New York department stores was interviewed in collecting the material for this Text.

In the department store referred to, the salesman is obliged to give his name and his line, and this information a girl writes on a regular form. There seems to be little chance for individuality under such a system. When questioned as to that, however, the merchandising man said: "Oh, yes, a few of the salesmen who come in show considerable ingenuity. For example, I received a slip one day which the salesman had evidently taken away from the girl and upon which he had written 'the first day it was on the floor, Marshall Field sold twenty-five of the models I want to show you now.' You may be sure he got in," he concluded. It is quite natural that the busiest buyer imaginable would have time for a proposition like that.

The same merchandising man brought out another point. A friend of his was selling cloaks and suits, and had the usual trouble reaching buyers of the large department stores. So the merchant advised his friend as follows: "Your house sells mourning cloak and suit specialties. The cloak and suit salesmen who call on us are legion. There are very few calling on us with a line of mourning goods. Instead of the 'cloaks and suits' on your card now, place 'mourning specialties.' So few men sell cloaks and suits for mourning that you are almost sure to see the buyer. After you have secured an audience on your specialty, there is nothing to prevent your talking cloaks and suits, also." It would seem, then, that the obstacles to seeing a large department store buyer are not insurmountable to the salesman of some ingenuity and originality.

19. *Proper approach.*—Let us suppose, now, that the salesman is in. He is crossing the space between the office door and the prospect's desk. The prospect, at this point, is sizing up the salesman, just as the salesman is sizing up the prospect. This is the time of first impressions. The salesman decides in those few seconds whether he has made a good first impression which he can take advantage of, or whether he has made a bad impression, which he will have to overcome. He is deciding whether the prospect will devote the first few moments of the interview to an endeavor to shunt him off or to make him feel at home. To a certain extent, he is deciding whether he will

dominate or be dominated. There must be no attitude of servility, no idea that he is trespassing upon the prospect's time. There must be a sincere feeling of equality and dignity and a realization of the importance of his mission. The confident man with a mission is known the minute he steps into a room.

REVIEW

Define sale, both legally and from a standpoint of modern business.

Name and discuss the developments in a sale.

Can you point out the particular parts of the salesman's work which bring about these developments?

What constitutes adequate preparations for the interview in your business?

How would you go about getting in to see a prospect in your business?

Would you use the telephone to make appointments? If so, how?

Discuss in a general way the problem of securing interviews.

CHAPTER IV

SELLING PROCESS—THE INTERVIEW

1. *Object of studying developments in a sale.*—The selling process may be approached from two separate and distinct points. First, by examining the various psychological processes involved we can determine why a sale is made. And second, by examining the statements and actions of the salesman we can determine how a sale is made. It is this latter point, how a sale is made, which we are principally concerned with in this book. Our main object, therefore, in examining in detail the developments that take place in a sale, is to be able to give the salesman a thoro understanding of these developments, in order that he may plan for any particular commodity or service, a presentation and demonstration that will produce these developments in their natural order and carry the sale to a successful conclusion. And it is with this end in view that the developments in the selling process should be studied.

2. *Attention; its nature.*—Psychologists tell us that the mind is under a continual bombardment of ideas, all of which are trying to make an impression upon it. The activities of a man's business that are going on about him, the people around him, the ideas that

he has in mind to work out, the train of thought started by some object on which his vision rests—to say nothing of such commonplace things as his morning mail, his telephone and the papers on his desk—all claim his attention. And what is more, there is insistent demand that he attend immediately to one or several of these things. The prospect, therefore, does not sit around with his mind a blank, calmly waiting for someone or something to capture his attention without a struggle. The salesman enters a field already well occupied and must fight for the undivided attention that is essential to a successful sale. He must, by his personality, his proposition and by his opening remarks, eliminate all competitors for that attention and hold the field alone.

3. *Conditions favorable to attention.*—Since the prospect's attention is so elusive, the salesman should not seek it at a time when other strong claims are pressing upon it. If the prospect is really too busy to give his attention, it is to the salesman's advantage to postpone his interview, make a definite appointment and call again. If the prospect is waiting to attend to some important business, the salesman should avoid being granted merely a short five or ten minutes of his time, for the prospect will find it impossible to give him any serious attention. It goes without saying, of course, that the salesman should be convinced of the sincerity of the prospect and should not allow himself to be put off with mere excuses.

The astute salesman will never break in upon a re-

tailer when he is engaged with a customer, nor will he stand waiting for any length of time where the retailer may be disturbed by his presence. The retailer is naturally more interested in his customer than in the salesman, for to the man in business, selling is always more interesting than buying.

A salesman should never attempt to talk to a man who is not listening—who is writing a letter or occupying himself in any other way. He should not attempt to compel attention by loud, fast or feverish talking. One of the best specialty salesmen in the country, whenever he met a situation of this kind, was wont to sit back and ask in a very dignified way, "Does this interest you, Mr. Prospect?" The answer almost invariably was an apologetic yes. The salesman's idea was that in order to be successful he would have to dominate the interview at every point. He preferred to lose the sale in a clean battle for the domination of the interview, rather than to allow the prospect to dominate him and give him but a scant measure of attention.

The ideal conditions under which to secure a prospect's undivided attention are to be alone with the prospect, to have him comfortable and to have absolute quiet.

4. *The card and the handshake.*—It might be well to digress here for a moment to discuss two small but important items. Altho the practice is quite common, it is not well to hand a man a business card when endeavoring to get his attention. The prospect can-

not look at the salesman and at his card at the same time. The salesman should tell the prospect who he is and what his business is, and thus take the opportunity to impress the prospect with his personality and to secure undivided attention.

Then, there is the much discussed question of whether the salesman should offer to shake hands with the prospect when introducing himself. Some salesmen always do this; others, never. There is a middle course. Good judgment should dictate to the salesman, in each individual case, whether or not he should offer to shake hands. The custom in the particular territory will largely govern. Handshaking is not the usual thing in New York or Chicago. In the South and West, however, the salesman would run the danger of appearing cold by not offering to shake hands. Then, too, buyers, purchasing agents and others who see a great many salesmen sometimes have an aversion to shaking miscellaneous assortments of hands during the day. Whenever the salesman does shake hands he should see to it that his act is hearty, red-blooded and sincere.

5. *The psychology of the small favor.*—Some salesmen believe that getting the prospect to do them one or two small favors early in the interview will tend to put the interview on a right footing. Their idea is that one man always enjoys helping another and feels friendly toward the man for whom he has done a service and who has expressed his appreciation. For this reason they make it a point, soon after they

have introduced themselves, to borrow a pencil or a pen from the prospect; ask if they may have a glass of water; request permission to lower a shade so as to remove a glare from their eyes; or, better still, let their actions subtly indicate that the glare is annoying and so get the prospect to suggest the lowering. Or the salesman may look about him with just the least suggestion of helplessness for a spot for his equipment until the prospect hastens to arrange a place.

W. F. Lockwood, sales manager of the Toledo Scale Company, in an article in *Printers' Ink,* gives a view of this subject from a different angle:

There is an interesting analogy between some of the well-known laws of physics and some of the not so well-known mental habits and conditions, that bears interestingly upon the work of the salesman.

Most of us know that familiar law in physics which says that bodies at rest have a tendency to remain at rest, while those in motion have a tendency to continue in motion. A body in motion tends always to continue its motion in the same direction. One of the interesting new things that we have discovered about the mind is that it follows the same law. The mind, if set in a certain direction and given a certain kind of a start, tends very strongly to continue in that same direction, unless something heads it off and sets it in another direction. Once start the mind along certain lines and it is far more difficult to stop it and turn it back in another direction than it originally was to start it.

And there is another respect in which the mind follows one of the laws relating to matter. It is difficult to start it off at full speed. Take a trolley-car for example. Now a trolley-car can never be started off at full speed. If some superhuman power tried to do so, it would result in all the

passengers being jammed, probably breaking a few arms, legs and many windows. Every trolley-car, every train of cars, every train of thought must be started slowly. So, if you tried to start your prospect off at full speed in the direction that you desire him to go, or in other words, if you tried to stampede him into giving an order, you would probably wreck your chances every time.

Now then, since it is unwise to try to start your prospect at full speed, what are you going to do? Why, the obvious thing is to start him very slowly doing the things that you ask him to do. Start him very slowly doing trifling things to which he will not attach the slightest importance, but which you know are getting him into the right attitude to do, later on, the big thing you are going to ask. Make all requests that possibly can be made, such as asking for a pencil or a bit of paper, or if you may sit down, or if you may lay your hat in a certain place—it doesn't make any difference what the request is; if it is something he will grant readily, you have gained a point. You have his mind moving in the right direction. You have started him into doing your will in a trifle. That has been easy, because he places no importance upon the trifle. But it will, in consequence of this, be much easier for you to get him to do your will in a larger matter a little bit later on.

But just as the experienced engineer continues to accelerate the motion of his train so that the passengers are hardly aware of it, you must accelerate the motion of your prospect's mind so that he will not be aware of what you are doing to him. It is a complicated matter, of course, for you to carry on a sort of double campaign in this manner. For remember that all this time you have got to be talking intelligently about your proposition to keep your prospect interested. Yet while you are doing this you must also be wide awake for opportunities of making trifling requests of your prospect which he will not hesitate to grant. But don't forget that each time you do this you are very gradually increasing the chance of your prospect's giving you an order when the time comes for you to ask for it.

6. *Transferring attention to goods.*—The first attention that a salesman secures will be directed to himself. It is a peculiar psychological fact that any impression, favorable or unfavorable, that the salesman makes upon the prospect in his approach will be transferred to the goods, when attention is diverted to them. Without thinking much about it the prospect assumes that a reliable house will not be represented by a poorly dressed or careless salesman. The article of good quality would seem to call for a man of quality to recommend it. The converse is also true; the large calibered salesman will suggest a reliable house; the man of quality will suggest an article of quality.

The salesman must divert the prospect's attention from himself to his goods if the sale is to progress. Any exaggeration of dress or manner, a loud voice or violent gestures will make this difficult. A gentlemanly, low-voiced salesman with an easy manner can divert his prospect's attention to the goods by placing them before him or making some strong, positive statement regarding them.

Any unnaturalness of speech or manner is likely to delay this diversion of the prospect's attention. The salesman who uses a standard presentation and has not made it his own so that he can deliver it naturally, will find it difficult to direct his prospect's attention to the article sold. A great many of the so-called clever openings have this defect.

Strange as it may seem, the man who talks easily

and well is likely to meet the same difficulty. It is not uncommon for a prospect to become wary of the smooth talker who calls upon him for the evident purpose of getting an order. A mild, gray-haired man who was after a large machinery order said, very early in his interview with the company's president: "I'm not much of a salesman; you see, I have been on the buying end nearly all my life and I find myself constantly taking the buyer's point of view." It was not until he walked out with the order in his pocket that those who had heard him began to realize just how much of a salesman he really was.

7. *Opening talk.*—The opening remarks of a salesman should be conservative. No superlatives should be used. Any over-emphasis or seeming exaggeration at this point will cause the prospect to become wary and possibly to close his mind against the proposition.

There is a subtle appeal to the prospect's vanity which may be used in the opening talk. The average man dislikes to feel that he does not measure up to a proposition. Any implication of doubt as to his concern's being able to dispose of a certain quality of goods, or of his being able to take advantage of a service designed for progressive business men, will cause him to concentrate his mind on proving that the implication is unjust. If the implication is too strong, however, or is in an offensive form, his antagonism will be aroused as well.

8. *An interest-provoking question.*—An adroitly

framed question can make this appeal to a man's vanity and get his attention. To quote Mr. William Maxwell, vice-president of Thomas A. Edison, Inc.:

Suppose you are selling saws. If they are high-priced saws, ask this question the instant you get your man to look you in the eye: "Have you an organization that can sell a very high-grade saw?" There is no possible answer he can make which will put you on the defensive until he yields you his attention and invites you to talk, which is what you are there for. Let us construct some answers a buyer might make to such a question:

FIRST

BUYER—We're doing it now.

SALESMAN—I guess I don't make clear to you the kind of saw I mean.

BUYER—Well, what kind do you mean?

OR, SECOND

BUYER—What we've got satisfies us.

SALESMAN—But could your organization sell a high-grade saw?—(Which brings the buyer back to where he was in the first place.)

If a saw salesman asks the question: "Have you an organization that can sell a very high-grade saw?" and his rejoinder to the buyer's is a polite but emphatic reiteration of the original thought, the buyer must finally invite an elucidation of that thought.

Any similar question will serve. Please fix this point in your mind: You haven't properly analyzed your goods if you can't frame an offensive, attention-getting question for use in your approach. The other day I was talking to a man who sells prints to shirtwaist manufacturers. He said, as nearly every salesman will say: "My line is different from any other." He also said: "There is no question I could ask a manufacturer of shirt waists, except to request him to look at my samples."

I asked him to name the chief talking point about his goods.

"The prettiest Parisian patterns in advance of competitors," he replied.

Then I suggested: "Suppose you said to a manufacturer: 'Have you any trade that would appreciate a pattern that is a positive craze in Paris right now—not yesterday but to-day?' What would the manufacturer say to that?"

"Why, he'd say: 'Let's see it,'" was the answer.

"Isn't that what you want him to say?" I inquired.

9. *Attention thru curiosity.*—Curiosity is a strong incentive to a prospect's giving a proposition undivided attention. The opening remarks of a great many able salesmen are framed to arouse a healthy curiosity in the prospect. The exclusive-agency man referred to in the last chapter would return to the store that he had picked for his agency and, approaching the proprietor, would ask: "Do you remember me?" "Yes," would come the answer, "I sold you a key-ring this morning." Thereupon the salesman would remark that the key-ring business had been pretty good in that town, and holding out his hand, would display those he had bought. The proprietor would naturally want to know whether he was making a collection. "No," would be his reply, "my firm sent me here with your name as that of the representative merchant in this town. My key-ring experiment has substantiated that information."

From that point he would use another strong lever to get attention. "I am here," he would continue, "to secure your opinion of our new merchandising plan,

which is of particular interest to live hardware merchants. I should appreciate your going over our proposition and telling me what you think of it." A prospect finds it very hard to refuse to listen to a salesman's story if all that is desired at the end is a candid opinion. It is needless to say that this opinion is usually favorable and is expressed by the prospect's putting his name on the dotted line.

Returning to the motive of curiosity in the securing of attention: A salesman one day stepped into the office of the general manager of a large western telephone company. "Mr. Manager," said he, "supposing I were to come to you with a pencil"—drawing one from his pocket—"with which your clerk could write down numbers"—and suiting the action to the word, he wrote down several numbers of four figures each —"and after doing so, could find the total of those numbers right here at the top of the pencil. That would be a wonderful pencil, would it not?" The manager had to admit that it would. "Well," resumed the salesman, "I haven't a pencil that will do that, but here is a writing machine that will." And forthwith he produced from his case a typewriter with an adding attachment and proceeded with a demonstration.

10. *Dramatic means of getting attention.*—Actions often speak louder than words in getting attention. A salesman selling a line of lamp chimneys, one of the strong points of which was that the chimneys were hard to break, would walk to the doorway of a store

that did not carry his line and, taking one of his chimneys, would roll it, none too gently, across the uneven floor until it met an obstruction and bounded back. "I'll bet you haven't a chimney in stock that you could do that with," he would then challenge the proprietor. This was rather a spectacular method of getting attention, surely, but certainly an effective one.

A variation of this method is, first of all, to attract attention directly and forcibly to an article to be sold. A new city salesman was employed by a specialty house that sold patented mouse-traps to retail dealers. The new man knew only the stereotyped forms of introduction, and he approached every buyer with the same formula: "Good morning, Mr. Smith. I am Mr. Brown, representing the Great Northern Specialty Company. I have an article—" but in the majority of cases he got no further, because he had wholly failed to secure the busy merchant's attention. He reported his difficulty to the sales manager, who resolved to go out with him and see wherein the trouble lay.

The sales manager witnessed one of the salesman's ineffective attempts to secure a hearing, and he determined to make the next approach himself, and let the salesman observe his methods. In the next store, the sales manager approached the buyer and without a word of introduction simply placed the mouse-trap in his hands. The article was an ingenious contrivance, and that fact, together with the unusual

method of presenting the proposition, immediately secured the customer's attention. A brief statement of prices and profits was all that was necessary to close the sale. The most cynical buyer cannot avoid a feeling of interest in any object that is placed in his hands.

11. *Prospect's participation in sale.*—This brings us to the point of the buyer's participation in the sale. The handling of an attractive thing creates not only interest in it, but also a desire to own it or to have it in stock for resale. This is especially true of mechanical devices. There is a fascination for the prospect in being able to push down the keys of the cash register, have the bell ring, the electric light flash up and the cash drawer open. There is a satisfying click when the lever of an adding machine is pulled down. It is fascinating to put letters thru a fast-running mailometer. It is interesting to be able to type numbers on a typewriter and see the totals appear. The automobile salesman realizes the value of letting the prospect whom he has taken for a demonstration ride, sit at the wheel.

Having the prospect handle the commodity is not the only way in which he can be made to participate in the sale. The selling talk should be so phrased as to draw him into conversation and get him to tell something about himself. The intelligent use of the information thus secured often enables the salesman to close the sale. At each stage of the selling talk, the prospect's agreement with the statements made by the salesman should be secured by the use of direct ques-

tions calling for an affirmative answer. Most of all, it is well to leave something to the imagination of the prospect in order that he may discover selling points for himself. Very often, a cleverly constructed, sketchy and incomplete presentation will cause the prospect to fill in the gaps by using his imagination and by asking questions until he has completely sold himself. Or, if this is not easy, he should at least be encouraged to ask questions which will bring about a full statement of all points. Most salesmen talk too much and do not allow their prospects to talk enough. There can be no more effective way to secure the true interest of the prospect than by getting him to participate in the presentation.

It must always be borne in mind, however, that the prospect's participation should be pertinent to the stage of the presentation which the salesman has reached. There is constant danger that the talk may become irrelevant. Many a salesman who has called to sell an enthusiastic auditor a loose-leaf ledger or a card system has remained for the afternoon to admire the wonderful systems installed by the auditor who, in explaining them, has led the salesman so far from his subject that he cannot get back to the purpose of his call. The salesman must bear in mind at this point that he should be dominating the situation and directing the interview. He should direct the participation of the prospect in the sale.

12. *Securing attention to a varied line.*—Many of the principles laid down here will seem impossible to

the jobber's salesman, who will probably argue that he carries an extensive and varied line, whereas this talk concerning the securing of attention applies only to the sale of some one specific article. It must be remembered, however, that the ordinary introductory remarks of the jobbing salesman: "I am representing Blank and Blank, and I want to see if I can't interest you in our line," never did much more than pick up a few orders that were waiting around to be taken. The jobbing salesman often weakens his approach by trying to tell his whole story and scatter his talk over every article in his line. The approach here, as in the case of the specialty salesman, should be based upon one specific article. After the jobber's salesman has secured attention to this, the securing of attention to other articles in his line will be much easier.

13. *Trunk lines and sample rooms.*—Let us discuss now, for a moment, the case of the salesman carrying a "trunk line"—to use the vernacular—a line that involves the carrying of one or more large trunks of samples. Securing the prospect's attention here, to the whole line at least, involves persuading him to visit the salesman's sample room at the hotel, unless the salesman desires to bring his sample trunks up to the door and can secure the prospect's consent to do so. This is not usually practicable in small towns, because the salesman will want several buyers to see his line, and because there is no space in most small stores where he could open his trunks. In the department stores in the larger cities it is not unusual for

sample rooms to be provided where the salesman can display his line just as he would in a hotel sample room; but even in such a case an appointment must be secured.

There are two great advantages in getting the buyer to come to the hotel. First, the opportunities for displaying the line are likely to be better; and second, the buyer is away from his place of business and there is no possibility of interruption from his employes.

14. *Making appointments.*—Above all, if the salesman intends to display in a sample room he should immediately secure one at the hotel and arrange his display before starting out to secure appointments. The salesman who takes a leading sample or two from his trunk in the baggage room at the railroad station, intending to secure a sample room only in the event of securing appointments, will half wish that he may not be put to the trouble; consequently he will be loath to press the slightly interested buyer for an appointment. The salesman who has gone to the trouble of unpacking his trunk and arranging his line, on the other hand, will do everything in his power to get someone to look at his goods.

The "trunk line" man should bear in mind that, while it is to the prospect's advantage to look over every line, it is probably impossible for him to do so. He is continually being asked to look over one line or another without any particular reason being advanced as to why he should. The real salesman will carry

one or two numbers of remarkable value or unique pattern by means of which he may impress his prospects with the unusual quality of his goods. He will paint a picture of the ease with which his goods can be sold that will make the buyer see the advantage of looking at them.

At that point, and not before, he will drive hard for an appointment. Then, if the prospect is a man who keeps his business appointments with absolute punctuality, all well and good. If there is the least doubt on this score the salesman, a little before the time set, will just happen to go by and will wait for the prospect so that they may walk to the hotel together.

15. *Displaying samples attractively.*—Once the prospect is in the sample room, the arrangement of samples will have much to do with securing his favorable attention, arousing his interest and creating desire. The salesman should learn to be an artist in displaying his line. Other things being equal, the salesman with the best sense of the artistic will sell the most goods. The ordinary sheeting provided by the hotel does not lend itself to an effective arrangement. A suitable background should be carried. For example, more cut glass will be sold from a background of black velvet than from one of white sheeting. The unusually effective samples should, as a rule, be displayed with more ordinary ones surrounding them; the placing of all the leaders together will

put them in competition, the one with the other, and result in the selling of fewer of them than if they are separated and contrasted with the less attractive goods.

Accessories to the goods themselves will enhance their attractiveness. The millinery salesman will arrange his ostrich plumes on a shape rather than display them separately. There is a successful shirt salesman who always displays his line with collars and harmonizing cravats attached.

16. *The "you" attitude.*—Above all, it must be remembered in getting attention, that the prospect is more interested in himself and his business than he is in the salesman or the salesman's business. The latter's opening, therefore, should always approach the proposition from the prospect's point of view. Any talk about the salesman or the salesman's house that fails to get the prospect into the story is going to leave him cold and uninterested. We said previously that salesmanship was the taking of the prospect's viewpoint and then swinging him around to ours. The talk to a jobber should take him on an imaginary selling trip and picture him selling the commodity offered to his customers. To the retailer a picture of himself reselling the commodity over his counter at a profit, is bound to be interesting. The customer must be pictured as enjoying the article. The prospect for an automobile should see himself, in his mind's eye, speeding along in the sunshine amid the admiration of

his friends and acquaintances. By painting a picture and putting the prospect in it, the salesman stands the best chance of securing undivided attention.

17. *Example of the "you" attitude.*—There was a stage in the development of the telephone business when it was a simple matter to persuade a business man to instal a telephone, but a different and more difficult thing to sell him an equipment that was adequate. There was, at that time, a department store in an Indiana town that had but one wire with two extensions, one on each floor of the store. The telephone people were convinced that this equipment was inadequate, but they had failed on several occasions to make the proprietor recognize that fact. Finally one of the big commercial men of the company came down from Chicago to see what he could do.

His first words to the merchant were: "I have come to talk to you about the service you are giving to your customers." He then proceeded to show how people who wanted to order goods over the phone found it difficult to do so because they were kept waiting while others talked over the one wire. Many times, he pointed out, this delay caused them to decide not to order by phone, but to buy later in person. Sometimes the result was that the trade went to another store. If the customer was sufficiently patient to wait, she had to explain the object of her call to the clerk who answered the phone on the first floor, explain it again when she was connected on the second story extension, and, after holding the wire while the

proper clerk was called, she was obliged to go over the whole matter with him, a third time.

Meanwhile the clerk downstairs had been called from his work, the first clerk who had answered the upstairs extension had been disturbed, and he or someone else had then to go after a clerk in the department to which the order belonged, and the latter probably had to travel the length of the floor to reach the telephone. All this time, customers in the store were being neglected and kept waiting because the clerk who should have been at a certain station was out of his department answering the telephone.

The principal theme in the telephone official's talk was customers and not telephones. The customer was a subject in which the merchant was greatly interested, so he asked: "What would you suggest?" The telephone man suggested two trunk lines, a switchboard, an extension for each department, and an advertisement in the paper to the effect that the store was especially well equipped to give the customer the best kind of service on telephone orders. The contract was signed immediately. Thruout the interview the salesman had taken the "You" attitude.

18. *Interest.*—Interest is attention sustained and developed. Attention is a temporary interest which the prospect takes in the proposition, and which he challenges the salesman to foster and sustain. Interest as a development in the sale means that he has met that challenge and secured the undivided mental concentration of the prospect.

If interest is aroused at all it will show very early in the sale. If the prospect can be induced to give more than momentary attention to a proposition, it is safe to assume that his interest has been aroused. In discussing the matter of attention we have treated several factors that have to do with interest. When we discuss the adoption of the "you" attitude or other methods of securing the prospect's participation in the sale, we are discussing ways and means of increasing interest and ripening it into desire.

The chief characteristic of the interest stage of the selling process centers in the presentation—a thoro talk on the proposition, especially as regards its relation to the prospect. This presentation may be a logical detailed description, or it may be a vivid appeal to the prospect's imagination. To one prospect the salesman may talk price; to another, quality. With one he must pose as a final authority as to the statements he makes; with another, he will take the attitude of merely reminding the prospect of things that he already knows, or of refreshing his memory on things forgotten. Whatever the dominant note, however, the presentation should be related as closely as possible to the prospect's interests and should be couched in such language that not even a city editor could detect a superfluous word.

19. *Salesman's vocabulary.*—Two men try to express the same idea. One flounders about, deals in vague generalities, and ends by giving no clear idea of just what he is driving at. The other uses specific,

homely, image-making words that drive the point home in a trice. The salesman's vocabulary should be replete with the latter sort of words. It is only the learned man who can think in terms of abstract generalization; and even he more easily grasps specific thoughts, framed in telling phrases. The salesman should see that his presentation is free from dull, hackneyed expression, and that it is built up of strong, straightforward, specific Anglo-Saxon words.

20. *Law of mental domination.*—Affirmation pure and simple, separated from all arguments and all proofs, is frequently one of the surest means of impressing the prospect. It is a curious fact that an excess of logical arguments will give rise to the suspicion that the salesman is endeavoring to bolster up a weak case. The more concise the affirmation and the freer it is from all appearance of proof, the greater its authority. This may well be remembered in building the presentation.

21. *Interruptions in the interview.*—Where the presentation of the proposition consumes any considerable length of time, the salesman is in constant danger of some interruption which may take the prospect's mind off the proposition and endanger the interest that has been created. The salesman should be prepared immediately to resume the talk at the point of interruption in some forceful and interesting manner. The idea is to plunge the prospect immediately back into the state of mental concentration in which he was before the interruption occurred. The

showing of a new piece of the salesman's equipment is an effective way of doing this. When the interruption has been more than momentary the prospect should be reminded of the point where the conversation stopped, by some such statement as: "When we were interrupted, we were discussing the mechanical features." If the interruption has been for as long as ten or fifteen minutes, the chances are that the prospect has grown cold and must be warmed up again. This is done by a concise review of the whole proposition up to the point at which the interruption occurred. The presentation proceeds as usual from that point.

22. *Demonstration.*—If the commodity sold is such as to make it possible, a demonstration of its construction and use is made a part of the presentation. Here is a great opportunity for the salesman. An actual demonstration emphasizes the essential points as no mere statement can. It brings up a constant procession of items of interest that the customer can see for himself, and makes the retaining of interest and the ripening of it into desire much easier than would otherwise be the case.

So true is this that ingenious demonstration methods are often devised for a commodity that does not lend itself readily to demonstration. Witness the lamp chimney demonstration described in this chapter. The Thermos bottle salesman, in handing his sample to the dealer at one stage of the presentation,

lets it slip from his grasp and fall heavily to the floor, as tho by accident. The dealer naturally expects to hear a loud report and to find the bottle wrecked. The fact that it is found to be uninjured impresses him with its sturdiness as nothing else would.

A young man selling a new line of cast-iron, porcelain-enameled bath tubs, who called upon the plumbing trade, found it difficult to establish distribution because cast-iron bath tubs are likely to crack or craze. To overcome this difficulty, the salesman carried with him a small model bath tub and a heavy piece of lead. To impress the plumber with the fact that his was a good tub, he would throw the piece of lead violently into it. No more forceful method of anticipating the "crack and craze" objection could be devised.

23. *Principles of demonstration, and prospect's participation.*—A great many articles lend themselves very readily to demonstration. Discourse as one will upon the superiorities of a vacuum cleaner, it would be next to impossible to sell vacuum machines in satisfactory volume without running the machine over the floor and dusting around the moldings and woodwork of at least one room, if the demonstration is given in the home of the prospect; or cleaning thoroly a rug, sprinkled with sand or powder if the demonstration is given in the sales room. In either case, the demonstrator will strew the carpet with cotton batting in order to show just how thoroly the machine

will remove lint. In either case, too, the prospect will be induced to operate the machine just as much as possible.

The cash register is usually demonstrated by carrying thru a number of imaginary commercial transactions—the salesman acting as the customer and paying real money for his purchases, and the prospect acting as the merchant, so that it will be he who actually rings up the cash, makes the change and closes the cash register drawer. Altho this necessitates the salesman's stepping out of his rôle of purchaser and giving the prospect instructions for the operation of the machine, it is important to arrange the demonstration in this way so as to secure easily and naturally the prospect's participation in the demonstration. Much the same plan is carried out in selling the adding machine, the salesman calling off the figures and instructing the prospect just how to register the numbers on the keys and how to pull down the lever.

The demonstration of a loose-leaf device will consist of unlocking and locking the binder and removing and inserting the leaves. A famous brand of overalls is demonstrated by the salesman having the prospect take firm hold of one leg of the trousers while he grasps the other and exerts considerable pulling force to demonstrate the strength of the crotch.

Few automobiles are sold without a demonstration. The prospect is taken out in the machine for a trial run during which the car is "put thru its paces" and its good points are demonstrated, especially its hill-

climbing ability and its quickness in the "getaway." At some stage in the demonstration the prospect is invited to slide over into the driver's seat and run the car himself. If any desire at all has been aroused previously, the prospect's joy at actually handling the wheel is likely to be so keen as to clinch the sale on the spot. This demonstrating is so important a phase of the automobile business that special demonstrating drivers are often employed and a certain number of cars are each year used as demonstrators until their newness wears off; these machines are then sold as second-hand cars.

The exact nature of any demonstration must depend entirely upon the nature of the commodity to be sold; but, in general, it may be said that all facilities for demonstrating the article to best advantage should be provided, and the demonstration should be so planned as to allow the prospect to participate in it just as much as possible.

It may be laid down as a principle that an actual demonstration should be worked into the presentation wherever the nature of the commodity permits.

24. *Threefold confidence.*—The true salesman will have struck a note of confidence at the very outset of the interview. As has been explained, confidence must pervade the interview and grow as the sale develops. The prospect must be confident that the goods are the product of a house of unquestioned reputation, and that they will measure up to the sample; he must have confidence, too, in the salesman's

statements as to the yet unproved quality of his commodity. The salesman will have created and increased this confidence by his personality, his knowledge of his business, his conservative statements, and by his dignity, simplicity, frankness, sincerity and earnestness. In brief, then, before interest can be developed into desire, the buyer must have a threefold confidence—in the salesman, in the goods and in the house behind them.

REVIEW

Discuss the opening talk and the first few moments of the selling interview, especially indicating the conditions of attention of the right kind.

Could you devise an attention-getting question for your line?

How would you secure attention to a varied line? To a "Trunk" line?

Discuss the "interest" stage of the selling interview, the "you" attitude and the prospect's participation in the sale.

Do the goods of your concern lend themselves readily to demonstration? Can they be demonstrated at all?

Discuss the confidence and its part in the sale.

How would you handle interruptions?

CHAPTER V

SELLING PROCESS—THE AGREEMENT

1. *Meeting objections.*—During the progress of the selling talk, occasional doubts, questions or conditions, either reasoned or unreasoned, are almost certain to arise, and these must be removed before interest can be ripened into desire. The cause of salesmanship received a severe setback when these mental conditions on the part of the prospect were termed objections; and it received an even greater setback when the salesman's methods of meeting them were called arguments. The term used by psychologists to designate any mental condition that opposes a mental impulse to action is "inhibition" or "inhibiting thought." Either of these is probably a better term to use than objection, to denote a mental condition that prevents a prospect from buying, for while the so-called objections of the prospect are sometimes decided objections to the proposition presented, they are more often honest questions and slight doubts, which the prospect himself is confident that the salesman will clear up. Argument suggests fight, but removing inhibitions is merely another case of swinging the prospect from his point of view to the salesman's —a small sale within the big one.

2. *Antagonism or a friendly get-together.*—J. K. Fraser, vice-president, Blackman-Ross Company, says in *Printer's Ink:*

> The new salesman expects the buyer to oppose him. His attitude shows it. Consciously or unconsciously he puts a chip on his shoulder. The prospective purchaser sees it. Our new salesman's talk then has a double burden—it must properly present the goods he is selling; it must overcome the antagonism created by his own fighting attitude. If the prospective buyer will talk at all in self-defense his talk is antagonistic. In the face of this our new salesman comes ahead with facts, figures and logic. They tell the story, but they don't change the attitude. Few men will buy until that attitude is changed. Almost invariably sales result from a friendly get-together. Arguments are necessary, but they are effective only so far as they harmonize with a friendly interview. If they are used to create a stand-off attitude they defeat themselves.

3. *Anticipating the objection.*—The best way to overcome an inhibition, objection or excuse—call it what you will—is to anticipate it, and in this way, if possible, to make sure that it never obtrudes into the sales talk at all. A thought that is expressed is harder to change than one which is unexpressed because the prospect puts himself on record and dislikes to recede from his position. This difficulty may readily be prevented. Thru continually presenting a particular proposition, the salesman, together with his colleagues in the same organization, will discover that certain points arise in almost every canvass. These are stock objections, so to speak. The salesman builds his presentation so as to anticipate them.

Others, less common, are found to be peculiar to certain types of prospects. The salesman prepares effective answers to these and weaves them into his talk where he expects them to come up. By adroit questioning and by close analysis of the prospect's remarks during the interview, the salesman tries to discover any inhibiting thoughts in the prospect's mind as he proceeds with his presentation. It will be found that, with rare exceptions, objections to any specific proposition are not peculiar to the individual prospect. Usually they are old opponents that the salesman looks for and is prepared to anticipate.

4. *When to mention price.*—The inhibition of price, the most common and the most formidable in almost every line, is anticipated by avoiding all mention of price until the quality and worth of the article, or possible profits from its resale, are firmly established and very clear in the mind of the prospect. This point is so important that price, except in rare instances, should not be mentioned early in the presentation even in response to the definite question of the prospect. The specialty salesman's reply to that question, if it came up before he was ready for it, might be: "Let us decide whether you want this first. Then we will talk price. I think I can put it within your reach." Then he will slip quickly back into his presentation. A salesman who presented a proposition for the handling of cigars in drug stores, which involved the buying of expensive fixtures, was often asked: "Well, what is the expense of all this?"

His reply was: "This is not an expense at all, Mr. Prospect. You may expect a big increase in your profits from it." This would forestall the price question until he was ready for it. The ideal time to mention price is when, after the presentation, the prospect's desire is so strong that he asks the price.

5. *Unreasoned inhibition.*—It has been suggested that inhibitions may be unreasoned. That is, the prospect himself may have no clear idea of why he does not desire the salesman's proposition. The salesman must maneuver here to make the prospect concentrate sufficiently to bring the inhibiting thought to a focus; he should also endeavor to elicit from the prospect some definite expression that will give him a clue to the unvoiced objection. It is possible to remove a conscious, reasoned inhibition but an unformulated one is often beyond the control of the salesman.

The salesman may take this unformulated resistance as an indication that he has not made the prospect want his proposition hard enough; and, by doubling back and using his reserve in such a way as practically to give the prospect a new selling talk, he can probably remove the resistance by increasing the prospect's desire.

6. *Tact in opposing the prospect.*—Despite all that even the best salesman can do, doubts or excuses will sometimes be voiced. Then there is danger of killing the prospect's idea too quickly. It humiliates a man to have the props rudely kicked out from under a

statement that he has advanced as sound. When the salesman wins such an out-and-out argument or otherwise humiliates the prospect he usually loses a sale.

The salesman will steer his course to avoid a head-on collision. He is glad the prospect mentioned that point. He hesitates—it is something new, something ingenious that the ordinary run of prospects would not think of. He can see that there may be something in it. And then he mildly wonders whether this point or that point which possibly the prospect may have overlooked, would not modify the point in question. And then the prospect begins to discover answers to his own objections and ends up by trying to prove to the salesman just why his original point was unsound. Every statement made, however, has been positive no matter how softly insinuated. The salesman has started with statements with which the prospect must agree and has stopped just at the point where the prospect begins to discover things for himself.

7. *Faulty presentation creates inhibitions.*—It is possible to create inhibitory thoughts in the mind of the prospect by the methods used or statements made during the presentation. A specialty salesman is likely to emphasize the big users of his product to such an extent that the small business man to whom he is talking will come to the conclusion that only big business men can use the product to advantage. A staple salesman can make such a point of high quality with the grocer in an ordinary neighborhood that his pros-

pect will come to the conclusion that the article would move only in wealthy communities. An automobile salesman who endeavored to show his prospect that he had perfect control of his machine at high speed on crowded Fifth Avenue, was stopped by a traffic policeman and served with a summons to appear in court next morning on a charge of reckless speeding. The occurrence spoiled the sale.

The suggestion to buy a product because substantial men in the community have bought it will often be a strong incentive to action for the young fellow; to the man who values independence highly and who thinks he possesses individuality the suggestion may be obnoxious, unless it is very gradually introduced. Negative suggestions have no place in the selling talk.

8. *Daring and independence.*—Sometimes a bit of daring at this point is a short-cut to the order. Hugh Chalmers tells how he was once sent to sell a cash register to a typical "hard customer." At the end of the selling talk, the prospect said, rising as if to end the interview: "Your proposition is all right but it costs too much money." Mr. Chalmers replied: "That is an objection we often hear. You know the selling policies of my company well enough to know that I have been supplied with more than fifty answers to that one objection and you have listened to me long enough to know that I know every one of those answers. They are so forceful that they would convince any man. Now, I can use these arguments here and get your order but it will take me two hours

to do it. Your time is worth something, why not sign now?" This was clever and proved successful in this particular case. It would be dangerous, however, unless the salesman were sure of his prospect.

An independent attitude, where it can be safely and effectively assumed, is a powerful weapon with which to make the prospect forget his doubts or excuses and lean the salesman's way. Our exclusive-agency man of the key-rings, referred to in the previous chapter, met most objections to his exclusive-agency plan in somewhat this manner: "Now, Mr. Dealer, we don't argue this proposition at all. I am here merely to explain it to you, to answer any questions that may occur to you, to get your opinion, and, if the proposition as I describe it appeals to you, to allow you to have the exclusive agency in this town for these goods. If, when I am thru, you don't care to accept the proposition, all well and good. I shall simply have to go over this ground again with one of the other hardware men." This courteously independent attitude, where it can be assumed, is just as effective as over-anxiety is weak.

9. *Discussing competitors' goods.*—There is an old saying to the effect: If your competitor talks about you, put him on your payroll. It matters little whether what he says is favorable or unfavorable; put him on anyhow. This would indicate that a salesman should avoid being drawn into controversy regarding his competitors' goods. He should know all about them, their strong points and their weak points, so

that he may touch these points indirectly in his presentation. A successful dry goods man has this answer to remarks about competing lines: "The company I am with puts out the best line in this country. If I thought there was a better one, I should be carrying it —and with my record I should have no trouble making the change. Until I have changed you may be sure that I have been unable to locate a line that is better than mine." And he may go on to say a few things about his company and his methods that will clinch that idea in the mind of the prospect. It is best not to discuss competitors' goods.

Some lines of goods seem to invite comparison—addressing machines and typewriting machines, for example. It is best to anticipate the selling points usually made for rival machines by emphasizing similar, but stronger points in regard to the machine being sold. Another method is to point out the fact that the machine being sold does not have the weak points of competing articles—always, whenever possible, without mentioning the name of the competing commodity. Whenever the prospect definitely mentions a competing article and asks how it compares on certain points with the one being discussed, the answer should always be given so as to savor as little as possible of what is commonly termed "knocking"; and the comparison should generally be accompanied by the admission that the competing article is a good one, albeit with the unmistakable insinuation that the one being sold is a better one.

10. *Minimizing objections.*—After all is said and done, the salesman must realize that some criticisms are just idly voiced and will quickly fade from the mind of the prospect if the salesman merely ignores and forgets them. If, on the other hand, he makes a mountain out of a mole hill the prospect will undoubtedly do the same. The salesman will learn to discern the opinion in which the prospect himself does not really believe, and to treat it accordingly.

The way to handle an objection of this style is not to answer it in detail, but to touch upon it as briefly as possible and then go right around it, continuing with the main body of the presentation; or, if the presentation has been completed, to use as reserve talk the points that are most calculated to arouse a genuine desire in the prospect.

11. *Objections indicating lack of desire.*—It is a psychological fact that the prospect whom the salesman's presentation has not impressed sufficiently to prompt his buying, almost invariably endeavors to qualify his refusal with a reason for not buying. He grasps and voices the first objection or excuse that occurs to him. The salesman must learn to recognize the excuse that arises from this cause, and to realize that he has not made the prospect really want his proposition. Here again, the thing to do is to handle the objection stated as briefly as possible and then endeavor to remedy the real defect—lack of sincere desire—by launching into a reserve selling talk which, in some cases may amount to presentation from an

entirely new angle. A prospect's objection that he cannot afford to spend the money for a proposition really means, if the prospect has been carefully selected, that he doesn't care to spend the necessary money for a proposition for which the salesman can arouse no more desire in him than he has yet aroused. And obviously, the thing to do is to increase that desire and not to endeavor to prove to the prospect that he has the money.

12. *Desire.*—Desire, as a development of the sale, means a want on the part of the prospect sufficiently strong to prompt the purchase. All thru the interview there will have been running thru the prospect's mind some such sub-conscious question as, "Can I afford to spend the money for the value and advantages offered?" To create desire means to arouse in the prospect's mind an emphatic answering "yes"—strong enough to develop the impulse to reach for a pen and sign the order, if that formality is necessary. This statement presupposes, of course, that all inhibiting thoughts have been removed or overcome.

A salesman may feel quite sure that he is holding a man's attention; he may rightly say to himself, "I have his interest." But who can say with any amount of assurance: "I have successfully removed every inhibiting factor and I have created desire"? We shall see that long after we have begun our closing tactics we are still testing for inhibiting factors—there is still a possibility of the prospect's drawing back. He who could, in every case, sense the particu-

lar moment when desire has been created, would indeed be a super-salesman, for that is the "psychological moment."

13. *Desire and the "you" attitude.*—This does not mean that there are no well-defined methods of creating a desire upon the part of the prospect. Here again, we come to the importance of the "you" attitude. There is one great principle underlying the creation of desire, from which special methods can be worked out in the case of any particular commodity. That principle is, to show the prospect how he will profit by the purchase—to show him just why he cannot afford not "to spend the money for the value and advantages offered."

In applying this principle, the grocery or dry goods salesman, after he has interested his prospect in the quality of the goods and increased that interest by pointing out how readily they can be sold, will paint a picture of the rapidity with which the goods will move and will talk in terms of dollars and cents and profits. This method will be followed even if he is endeavoring to stock the dealer up with a branded staple on which the profit is smaller than on the line the prospect now carries. For here he will talk the indirect profit of handling the line—the fact that people will drop in for that particular thing and remain to make other purchases. Or he may point out that while the profit per unit is smaller than on the line that the prospect is handling, the total profit is larger because the new goods will have a quicker turnover.

A vacuum cleaner salesman had secured the attention and aroused the interest of both the housewife and her husband by discoursing on the superiority of vacuum cleaners, showing by an actual demonstration what the machine could do, and pointing out the convenience and superiority of his particular machine. He then abruptly put the machine aside, put away all literature as to its mechanical details, and, leaning forward, said: "Now, Mrs. Brown, it is not really a vacuum cleaning machine that I am asking you to buy. I am asking you to buy an hour a day for the rest of your life. I am asking you to buy the time to get out afternoons—to take in a matinée on Wednesday—and still keep your home just as neat and clean as it is now." And then he got in a master stroke. Turning to the husband, he said: "And you can throw aside your irksome old whisk broom, too, and go out each morning brushed by vacuum." This argument, in addition to showing a further advantage, presented such a vivid appeal to the imagination, that he created a desire, not for the machine itself, but for that hour a day and for the privilege of being brushed by vacuum.

A writer on various scientific and business subjects was telling why he had bought a children's pictorial encyclopedia. He said that even tho he had no children he had been interested in the salesman's presentation, tho in a detached sort of way. Then, the salesman switched to a talk on the advantages of depicting scientific phenomena and business processes by pic-

tures and short, easily understood descriptions, rather than by the long and involved descriptions common to the ordinary "grown-up's" encyclopedia. Wouldn't it be easy, he wanted to know, for the writer to get information quickly in this manner for his own articles? He clinched his argument by showing the entire steel industry, from the digging of the ore to the rolling of steel rails, pictorially described. The author said that after running over these pictures with the salesman, he understood the different processes in the manufacture of steel more clearly than ever before. And right there he decided that the encyclopedia would be a big advantage to him. It will be seen that the salesman created desire by following the same old formula of showing the prospect how he would profit by buying.

There is a time-honored and very effective saying that when a man needs a thing he pays for it, whether he buys it or not; and this principle can be applied to almost any proposition. The adding-typewriter salesman proves it to his prospect by figuring the higher cost of making out bills by the old method. The branded-staple man shows the dealer that he will pay in lost sales if he does not stock up. The exclusive-agency man shows that the dealer will lose profits that will go to his competitor if he does not accept the agency in question. The advertising solicitor shows that the merchant who needs advertising will pay for it many times over in trade that passes by his door if he does not secure that trade thru the

medium of advertising. The life insurance solicitor will intimate that the family of the man who needs insurance and does not take it, pays the premium after he is gone. These are but variations of the "self-interest" principle.

14. *Desire indicated.*—Desire may be indicated by the prospect's asking the price of the commodity offered; and if, in addition, he inquires as to terms of payments, he is evincing a most healthy desire. Most salesmen, particularly those who represent specialty propositions, adjust their presentations so as to bring out this price question at the point at which they calculate desire will have been created.

It should not be understood that there is necessarily any visible indication that desire has been created. The salesman will find that many prospects will observe a sphinx-like silence and an unchanging expression thruout the entire presentation. And furthermore, the salesman will learn that these are among his best prospects. The converse is true also; the over-enthusiastic individual who agrees too readily with everything the salesman says, and who evinces all the signs of a healthy desire, will oftentimes allow himself to be led right up to the closing point, and then refuse to buy or to give a definite reason for not buying. Whatever the manifestation, the instant the salesman has reached the climax of his "advantage" talk, is the time to take the hazard on the closing tactics.

15. *The close.*—We now come to the crux of the

whole sale—in fact, the crux of all salesmanship. It is the point, too, at which most of our failures become apparent, at least to ourselves. We may sit down at the close of each day and plan the work for the next; we may burn the midnight oil studying our goods; we may rack our brains in an effort to clothe uninteresting details with a garment of imaginative appeal; we may spend eight hours a day painting beautiful word-pictures to numerous prospects; but our work will be largely wasted, or at least will not bring us the results it should, if the selling talk does not have a courageous, compelling close.

If attention has been developed into interest, and if interest has given place to desire, the time to close—that oft-mentioned psychological moment—has arrived. For this psychological moment marks the maximum force of the buying impulse—all inhibiting thoughts have been subjugated, and desire is at its height. Its presence is sensed by some salesmen more readily than by others, and sensed by all more easily in some cases than in others. Some profess to know in every case just when it arrives, but to do this would require reading the human mind as an open book and never making a mistake in closing. As a matter of fact, no salesman closes all the sales he endeavors to close.

When we say that the psychological moment has passed, we mean that there has been in the interview a time when all inhibiting thoughts were removed, the desire was created and the man made ready for

closing, but that by clumsy closing tactics, an awkward delay, or by talking beyond the point, the salesman has given the prospect an opportunity to create a new set of inhibitions. As one writer has put it, he has recovered his shield of doubt and sword of disagreement, and put the salesman to rout.

16. *Securing decision.*—Whether, on the one hand, the psychological moment has been sensed, or, on the other hand, the salesman merely feels that he *may* have created desire, there are certain closing tactics to be gone thru. These consist largely of what may be termed the mechanics of closing; and these mechanics are based on the law of positive suggestion.

In this connection it might be well to remind the reader once again that at no point does this Text view the prospect as a victim to be played upon by the salesman against the former's better interests. And we emphasize that viewpoint now. It is a peculiar fact that nearly all men, except perhaps the biggest of business executives, are addicted, to some extent at least, to indecision and procrastination. They gather all the essential points on some proposition, weigh them pro and con—and then put the whole thing over until the morrow. They want to "think it over." There is some danger of selling to certain merchants greater quantities than they can readily dispose of and the salesman should scrupulously avoid this. There are more merchants, however, who do not see or take advantage of their merchandising opportunities and who greatly under-buy. Because

the salesman's time is valuable, and because the prospect will never see the advantages of the proposition more clearly than when the whole thing is fresh in his mind and the salesman is with him, the man who has been convinced must be forced to act—and to act at once.

Except in extremely rare and isolated cases, the salesman need not fancy that his closing tactics, no matter how strong or clever they may be, will land an order if his prospect is not convinced—will persuade a man to sign who has not been carried thru the other stages, including desire. The real point is that many who have been carried thru these previous stages slip away before the end. They desire to "think it over." Even the strongest salesmen do not close every sale when they have brought the prospect to the point of desire. A prospect carried thus far, however, is a distinct asset and the salesman should make every effort to close him.

17. *Courage and positive suggestion.*—Courage is one of the big requisites at the close. The new salesman, fearing what the prospect may think of him, comes to an awkward pause after he has stated prices and terms. He knows that the next thing he ought to do is to assume that the prospect is going to buy and to use the mechanics of the close, but he lacks the nerve to do it. As a matter of fact, he could well dismiss all fear as to what the prospect is thinking of him, for in nine cases out of ten—and this is especially true if he has dominated the interview—the prospect

is too busy wondering what the salesman thinks of him to think anything himself about the salesman. After a time, however, they become natural and even instinctive to him, and the salesman goes thru the mechanics of the close so often that courage is thus ingrained in his nature.

The successful salesman assumes quite naturally that the prospect is going to buy. He has kept him interested all thru the talk; the prospect has agreed with him during the various stages of the presentation that each part of his proposition is good; the prospect has acquiesced in the advantages of the proposition. Why not expect him to do the logical thing—buy? And, sincerely expecting him to buy, why not write out the order, or go after his decision in some other way? The salesman has worked the prospect adroitly, tho with absolute fairness, into a position where it is harder to check the salesman than to go on and complete the sale. To buy is logical; not to do so, illogical.

18. *"Decision on a minor point" principle.*—We said that even at this point we are still testing to find whether this desire has really been created. Because of his doubt on this score, the salesman cannot risk a pointblank question, Do you want the goods? That might bring an equally pointblank reply, No, and close the interview. The salesman plays either for a favorable decision or for an opportunity to discover any inhibiting thought that may exist and use his reserve talk to overcome it. He works, therefore,

for a decision, not on the main issue, but on some minor point.

When the retail salesman has centered the attention of the prospect on one particular suit of clothes and feels that desire has been created, he suggests the possibility of making certain slight alterations and, if there is no objection voiced, he calls the fitter. Very often, he calls the fitter merely to find out whether or not any alteration will be necessary, merely as a subterfuge to take advantage of this "minor point" principle.

The staple salesman makes a tentative suggestion as to an assortment or asks the prospect how he would prefer to have the goods shipped, and immediately follows up that question with a positive suggestion as to a good way to ship them. If the prospect voices approval of his suggestion, it will be seen that his decision on the main issue has virtually been clinched by asking his decision on a minor point. Of course, he may remark that he hasn't said that he wanted the proposition yet, but in that case the salesman can express surprise, beg his pardon, ask him why and strive again to arouse desire, by means of his reserve talk.

The vacuum cleaner man mentioned previously, immediately after making the statement quoted drew out his regular order blank and said: "The cost of this machine is $84. I presume that you would prefer to give me your check for the whole amount and have it over with." "How else can I pay for it?" asked the man who was to be brushed by vacuum—

and the decision had been secured! Signing the order blank and arranging for delivery became mere matters of detail.

19. *"Writing out the order" close.*—Probably the best closing maneuver, because it is the most positive in its suggestion, is actually writing out the order blank. Let us go back once more to the exclusive-agency man. He closes with: "Now, to start in on this proposition, you'll only need"—and begins to write down on his order form what the dealer will need, discoursing on the virtues of the goods as he writes. The dry goods salesman begins writing a tentative order, including the numbers which have particularly interested the buyer with quantities which the salesman thinks the buyer could use. For some reason, it is very difficult for the average man to interrupt the salesman while he is writing. There seems, too, to be a certain fascination about the proceeding that keeps the prospect's mind following the pencil and clinches his decision to buy.

Specialty men are usually adept at this "writing the order" form of closing the sale. A very successful insurance man, when he thinks the psychological moment has arrived, spreads his application on the prospect's desk, leans over, takes the prospect's pen, dips it in the prospect's ink and quickly writes in on the form of application the form of policy that the prospect is going to take. Then, "Now, sir, what are your initials?" Few men will refuse to give their initial—it is so hard to do so without appearing dis-

courteous. "Let's see, you're treasurer here, are you not?" and then, without waiting for an answer, "Yes, treasurer," and down goes the word treasurer and the name of the company. "Now, where shall I send the doctor to examine you? Here or to your residence?" and without waiting for a reply, "I should suggest right here. It will take only a few minutes—say tomorrow at two?" And down goes the memorandum of the hour of the appointment. "Now, sir, you can make your check for the premium payable to the company and I will pin it right to this application. I'll give you a copy of this application, by the way." And he proceeds to fill out a duplicate application, to be signed by the applicant, as the prospect reaches for his check book.

The strong points about this close are, that the salesman takes it for granted that the prospect is going to apply for insurance; he secures the active cooperation of the prospect in filling out the application; he does not ask the prospect to do any writing until the decision has been made—by the salesman, you will notice—and then the first thing he has to write is his check; answers to the questions which might cause deliberation or hesitation on the part of the prospect are not waited for—decisions are made for him by the salesman. Probably the most important thing to be noticed about the method is the assurance and poise that it takes to use it.

20. *Turning points of decision.*—A slight difference in a salesman's tactics at this point in the sale

is likely to make a large difference in the effect of his entire talk. A well-known sales manager who was coaching a new salesman in field work found it necessary to write a special clause into one particular contract in order to remove an objection on the part of a prospect. He wrote the clause into the contract, read it over carefully to the prospect and said: "I guess that fixes you all right on that point, doesn't it?" The prospect answered promptly enough, and enthusiastically enough, too, "Yes, I think it does." The sales manager thereupon handed the prospect his fountain pen and said, "Just sign your name on this line, please." The prospect took the pen, held it above the contract for a moment—and then put it down. Nothing that the manager had in his reserve talk could get him to take it up again. The psychological moment had passed. When the two got outside, the sales manager turned to the beginner and said: "Now, how do you suppose I lost that sale?" "If you will allow a suggestion," said the new salesman, "I should say that if after you had secured his agreement to the special clause, instead of giving him the pen and telling him where to sign, you had drawn the contract to you and asked, 'Now, how shall we route the shipment, Mr. Prospect?' I think he would have come thru." The sales manager who told this story said that the new salesman was undoubtedly right.

21. *Mechanical schemes.*—There are a number of mechanical tricks which can be worked out as aids in

closing and which frequently prove quite effective. There is a very successful salesman in the South who carries an enormous fountain pen that somewhat resembles a war club. Any writing that a salesman does is a positive suggestion to the prospect and creates a desire, faint tho it may be, on the part of the prospect to write also. This salesman claims, however, that the desire to try out that unusual looking pen is well-nigh irresistible. He has no trouble in getting the prospect to take it in his hand and try it out—on the dotted line. It is hard to say how generally true this may be; in this particular case there is not the least doubt that the salesman would get big results without any pen at all.

A story is told of a certain salesman who sold a specialty to retailers. He would stand at one of the old-style slanting desks, and after he had told his prospect where to sign would toss his pencil carelessly upon the desk. Immediately it would begin to roll down to the floor, but he would make not the least effort to stop it. What more natural than that the prospect himself should stop it? And lo! there he was with the pencil in his hand and ready to sign.

It should be understood that these are mere tricks, that possibly if they were done the least bit awkwardly they would cheapen the salesman in the eye of the prospect. Most high-class salesmen get along very well without them.

No salesman gets along well, however, without strong closing tactics of some sort and without cer-

tain definite mechanical moves for securing the prospect's immediate decision. This whole matter of the close may be summed up in one basic principle: make decisions—do not merely expect them.

REVIEW

Discuss the anticipating of objections, the meeting of infrequent ones, discussion of competing goods, and tactful methods of opposing the prospect.

Show why "inhibition" is a better word than "objection."

How would you proceed if you felt that an objection voiced by a prospect did not reveal his fundamental reason for not buying?

Discuss desire as a development in the sale.

Can the psychological moment be readily perceived in a majority of interviews?

What particular part of the selling talk is depended upon to develop interest into desire? Illustrate. What would be the desire-creating talk for your goods?

Discuss the close and closing tactics. Why is courage an important factor here?

Indicate what is meant by, "make decisions; don't expect them."

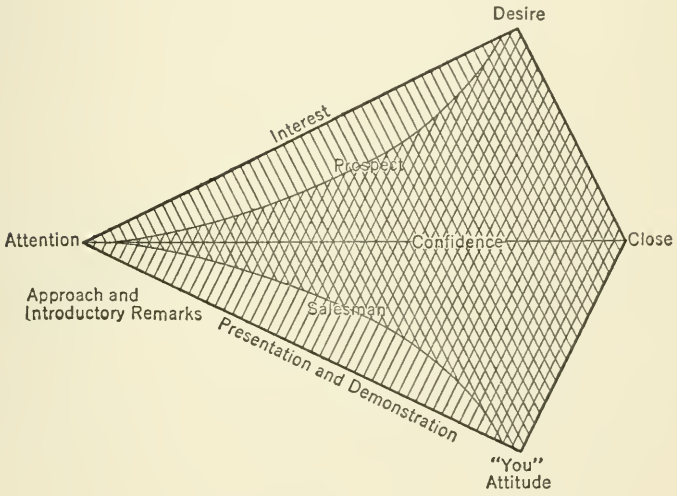
Indicate how positive suggestion is used at this point.

How many "minor points" can be taken advantage of to clinch the decision in the case of your goods? What mechanics might be devised?

CHAPTER VI

SELLING PROCESS—MISCELLANEOUS

1. *Concurrence of buyer and seller.*—Thruout this discussion of the selling process we have kept two things constantly in mind: the words and actions of the salesman, and the reaction of the buyer to these



words and actions. Let us endeavor to chart these two phases of the selling process and show their concurrence.

The upper half of the accompanying diagram rep-

resents the buyer; the lower half the salesman. The salesman's approach and introductory remarks secure the prospect's attention. As he proceeds with his presentation and demonstration, attention changes to ever-increasing interest. The good salesman will have approached his subject from the prospect's standpoint right from the start. He will make use of this "you" attitude more strongly than ever, however, at the end of his presentation and demonstration. Interest will thereby be ripened into desire. Confidence, starting very early in the interview, increases during its progress until, at the point of desire, it entirely bridges the gap between the buyer's and the seller's mind and blends them harmoniously. From this point the salesman drives sharply—albeit fairly—for the close, and the minds of buyer and seller meet at the point of completed sale.

2. *Persistence of the right kind.*—Too many salesmen lack the right kind of persistence. They present their proposition in a more or less stereotyped fashion and, because the prospect does not respond immediately with his signature, become discouraged and leave him, when a little more endeavor, a little more judicious "working" would have secured an order and, in some cases, would have created a permanent customer.

There are still more salesmen whose persistence bores and tires their prospects without getting the salesmen anywhere. The trouble here is that usually the salesman has allowed the prospect to come to a

definite, adverse decision and is battling to change it. The really astute salesman plans his talk in such a manner as to prevent an outright adverse decision. He tests out to discover whether or not inhibition has been removed and desire created. If he believes that conditions are right he then leads up to the close. If at this point, however, he finds some inhibiting thought still in the prospect's mind, he once more strives to create desire. In other words, he finds that the psychological moment has not quite arrived. When he again thinks that the prospect is ready, he leads back to the close on a new tack. And unless he sees quite clearly that further persistence at that particular time would not result in an order and might even destroy all chance of securing one in the future, he continues to maneuver until his efforts are crowned with success or his reserve talk is exhausted. That is persistence of the right kind.

We may judge from this discussion that the salesman should have such a fund of reserve selling talk and extra selling points as to make it possible for him to assemble two or three different complete presentations of his proposition; and that he should be master of as many different methods of closing a sale as his ingenuity, combined with the experience of his associates on the same proposition, can devise.

3. *Ill humor unsportsmanlike.*—Above all, any display of peevishness or temper at the close on the part of the salesman is unpardonable. The prospect is a reasonable being, presumably possessed of sound

judgment. He must be credited with the ability to decide for himself and with a clear knowledge of just what he wants. To tell him that his judgment is extremely bad may ease the disappointed salesman's mind, but it is not to be expected that the prospect will agree with any such criticism.

Furthermore, selling is a clean, fascinating game, in which the minds of salesman and prospect, respectively, move and countermove for supremacy. Any display of ill humor is just as unsportsmanlike as it would be in tennis or baseball or polo. The salesman should always bear in mind that the prospect's source of information about the proposition is the salesman himself. If he remains cold or lukewarm, therefore, the salesman should take the blame to himself and endeavor to change the attitude.

One of the basic principles involved was expressed recently by a salesman for a printing house. He had put up a long, earnest and masterly talk to secure a large contract for his concern and had been turned down only because the prospect thought that another house with larger equipment would make quicker deliveries. It was difficult, of course, for the salesman to accept defeat smilingly, especially after having lost by such a small margin. But, after recognizing that his cause was lost and before preparing to leave, he sought to relieve the tension of the interview by exchanging with the prospect a few short remarks not especially relevant to the subject that they had been discussing. He lapsed quickly into a story that illus-

trated a point; the prospect responded with one which illustrated another; and when both were laughing heartily, the salesman prepared to take his leave. The buyer looked at him admiringly. "You are fairly cheerful, considering that you have just lost a sizable contract." "Mr. Prospect," returned the salesman, smiling, but in earnest, "if I should ever start to leave your office without a real smile on my face, call me back and give me the opportunity to leave in the right way."

4. *After the sale.*—Very often after the sale has been made, the order has been signed and the salesman has gone, a reaction occurs in the buyer's mind. In the very nature of things, he bought at the highest point of enthusiasm. With that first enthusiasm dying down and the domination of the salesman removed, the old objections may arise and confront him once more. The replies that the salesman made to these objections have lost some of their force. In short, the prospect begins to doubt the wisdom of his purchase. He needs strong reassurance or there will be danger of a cancelation. If one of his big objections to buying was that he was overstocked on the particular line of goods offered, the salesman, after the order is taken, should recapitulate to him the plans proposed for moving the goods. If an exclusive agency has been taken or if a piece of real estate has been bought, the salesman will do well to remind the prospect that another person was after it and stood ready to sign if an opportunity offered; such a re-

minder will do much to reassure the wavering purchaser. If there is literature that describes the proposition, the salesman should leave it with the buyer. Once the buyer has undergone this reaction and emerged from it reassured, there is very little probability of a subsequent change in his attitude.

5. *Furnishing helpful details.*—Furthermore, there is a great deal of detailed information which the buyer should have about his purchase but which would seriously confuse the presentation. The time to go into these matters is after the order has been closed; they should then be fully treated. Of course, when an article is to be resold, a great deal of explanation will be needed. The dealer must know why he bought, so that he may know how to sell. Most of this explanation can be saved to advantage until the sale is concluded. It may seem to the man who has never sold that no intelligent person will buy before he knows all about the purchase. The fact remains, however, that practical men of business do so. Very often their buying is based on nothing more than a general outline of the proposition offered, coupled with confidence in the salesman.

At the close of the sale is the point, too, at which the salesman, especially if he deals in a specialty line, gets that valuable cooperation which leads him to the buyer's friends, who are the best possible prospects for him. And this is the point at which the retail salesman adroitly draws the buyer's attention to other things and effects further sales.

6. *The right impression at leaving.*—The salesman should always leave the buyer with the assurance that he, personally, will give the order attention as far as possible, and that he will drop in to see whether the goods have come promptly and in good condition. In short, to leave a right impression is quite as important as to gain an audience.

Whether or not a sale has been made, the matter of making a dignified exit is important—and also difficult. The salesman's methods of handling his samples or his equipment should be such that within a very short space of time after the interview has terminated, everything will be packed up and he will be prepared to leave. The man who has turned the salesman down and is anxious to get at other things, but who is too courteous to do so until the salesman has taken his leave, is disconcerting as he sits with his hands on the arms of his chair watching the salesman fumble for different pieces of his equipment. The embarrassment is likely to be almost as great where a sale has been made. The salesman, therefore, should have a definite system that will enable him to get away the moment he terminates the interview.

This brings up another point. A very successful business man said recently that he has made it a rule of his life always to be the one who terminates the interview; to be the first to rise when negotiations are concluded or an interview has accomplished its purpose; and invariably to dismiss the other fellow before the other fellow dismisses him. If the salesman ap-

plies this principle in his work he will have done much to make his exit a dignified one.

When a salesman thanks a prospect—after a sale has been accomplished—while he should do so in such a way as to leave no doubt that the order is appreciated, he should, at the same time distinctly give the impression that a mutal benefit is involved. "Thank you—and you will thank me," tho extremely hackneyed, expresses the principle. Some such formula as this might be used: "I want to thank you, Mr. Prospect; I am glad to have this order, and when the goods arrive I am sure you will like them, even better than you think now."

7. *The "bill starter."*—A big wholesale dry goods salesman said recently: "Whenever I have a buyer in my sample room out on the road, I lead him immediately to the article for which he asks, or which I know he needs. That starts the bill. It seems an easy matter to get other items on the order once the ice is broken.

"When a man comes into the house and asks for a particular article, however, I show him that article last. I lead him to the article for which he has asked in a roundabout way, stopping casually to show him things and quoting prices as we go along. Many times, I have a half-dozen items on the bill before we have arrived at the particular thing that he asked for when he came in. The idea here is, that if he were led immediately to the item he came in to buy, he would buy it and, deciding that his errand had been accom-

plished, would leave without looking at other things in stock."

In discussing the subject of attention, we said that the man handling a varied line should make his approach on one particular commodity. He should stick to that particular commodity until he has either sold the prospect or discovered that the latter absolutely will not buy. In other words, the making of a sale right at the start will make the adding of items to the order easier and more rapid than under any other conditions.

8. *A pitfall to be avoided*—For the benefit of salesmen who still have their first trips to make, a practice not uncommon with more or less unscrupulous buyers might be illustrated here. A buyer of woolens for "cutting up" was looking over the line of a young salesman on his first selling trip. As he went thru the line, he set aside a number of samples with some commendatory remark that would seem to indicate that they impressed him favorably enough to prompt his buying. The young salesman naturally had visions of quite a large and satisfactory order.

When he had seen all the samples, the buyer selected a staple serge that is sold by all woolen houses on an extremely small margin of profit and at a practically uniform price. "What is your price on this?" he asked. When the salesman had given him a quotation, the buyer threw up his hands, expressed surprise at the high price asked by the salesman's firm and stated that the salesman of a rival concern had

offered him the same thing at a considerably lower price. The young salesman, not to be outdone by an older rival in his territory, replied that if the other concern could afford to sell the goods at that price, his could, too. "All right," replied the buyer, "you may send me some at that figure," and he proceeded to order quite a large quantity.

The salesman, looking upon this particular item as a mere "bill starter," held his pencil poised above his order blank, while he suggested that the buyer select from the other samples set aside those from which he wished to order. "Oh, no," the buyer replied to this suggestion, "they are all fine, and your prices are about right on them, too, but I am pretty well stocked on all of the numbers represented. That serge is about the only thing I want to order today." All hope for the large and varied order vanished from the salesman's mind and in its place came the sickening realization that he had taken an order at a price that represented a heavy loss to his firm. He rightfully felt that he had been tricked.

This practice is indulged in, with variations, by buyers in many lines. In the case described, the salesman, after having spent a sleepless night, did the sensible thing. He went back to the buyer, explained that when he quoted the price, he knew he was taking a loss on the serge and did it only because he believed the buyer was going to place a large order in the other numbers picked out, in which case the profit on the other lines would have wiped out the loss on the serge.

Therefore, he explained, since the rest of the order had not been forthcoming, he did not feel justified in accepting the order given.

9. *Getting the price.*—This brings us to the question of getting the price that shows a profit. In many lines the salesman is given wide discretion in the making of prices. In the selling of special machinery, for example, it is impossible to provide the salesman with fixed prices. He is sometimes obliged to make his estimate and quote a price in the first interview. A great many wholesale dry goods and grocery salesmen are allowed to quote reduced prices, tho this practice is becoming less common. Some salesmen are price-getters; they have no trouble in winning over lower-priced competition. Howell von Blarcom, district sales manager of the Westinghouse Machine Company, tells an amusing story of a salesman of his who always managed to get top price, and who one day added twenty-five dollars to the maximum price on a small machine order because the purchaser had kept him waiting. Other salesman are confirmed price-cutters. They boast that they can sell goods if the price is right. They are easily browbeaten into believing that their competitors are quoting prices lower than theirs. Trust them with the cost figures of their goods and they will sell on a margin too narrow to pay their traveling expenses.

The salesman should always remember that merchandise that is worth anything always costs something to produce. It is only fair to assume that the

house he is working for is producing economically and getting a fair margin of profit. If he meets with the statement that his competitors are quoting lower prices for the same goods, he should have the moral courage to assert that the goods could not be the same at a price lower than the one he quotes. Nine times out of ten, this lower price is one of the little fictions of the purchasing agent.

10. *Emphasize service and quality.*—More and more, service and quality are overshadowing price. The salesman who can talk service and quality convincingly when lower prices are mentioned will cause those lower prices to be forgotten. Some time ago a large printing order was to be given out by a firm in New York. A number of dummies were made up and sent to different printers for their estimates. A salesman from one of the printing houses came in to get a dummy. When he received his copy he turned to the man who was to place the order:

"Mr. Buyer, if you are going to award this job to the lowest bidder, I'm beaten now and I won't start. As a matter of fact, however, it is not a low price that you're after. You think too much of quality for that. What you really want is a combination of high quality and reasonable price; and if you place this job on that basis I am going to win.

"The biggest variable in printing is 'make-ready,' the adjustment of the plates in the press so that they will print evenly. The printers who submit the lowest bids to you will slap the plates into the press and make the run without any 'make-ready.' Those who bid slightly higher may fuss around for an hour or two making ready and then, hit or miss, will make the run anyhow. My company will keep a

press standing idle a day if necessary in order to get the 'make-ready' perfect. We won't start to run until we are assured of turning out a quality job.

"Now, Mr. Buyer, we are the lowest priced quality printers in New York. If you want the lowest price compatible with the highest quality and will award this job on that basis, I am going to get your business."

When bids began to come, the differences in amount were startling. But the salesman's talk had made such an impression that this man's house, tho its bid was much nearer the top than the bottom, was awarded the job. There is probably no trade in which the price competition is more severe than in printing. Despite that, this salesman by a sincere convincing "quality" talk was able to make price assume an importance secondary in the mind of his prospect.

The matter of special discounts, approaching advances in price, possible restriction of supply and like inducements may also be mentioned by the salesman. If he can truthfully advance any such arguments as a reason for the prospect's signing up at once, he will find them to be of material aid in closing. They are not, however, necessary to the work of a good salesman.

11. *"Think it over."*—The only sales that pay are the sales that are closed. The salesman is paid for the orders he secures and not for the prospects that he has lined up. The "think it over" and the "call back again" are not, therefore, particularly encouraging things for the salesman to hear at the close of an interview.

The prospects who give these answers fall into two classes: those who are naturally conservative and deliberate, who never make a decision without sleeping on it, who want to make further investigations—in short, those who sincerely intend to think it over; and those suave individuals who merely take this polite method of turning the salesman down. The salesman must learn to distinguish carefully between these two classes, or those in the latter class will keep him running around in a circle chasing will-o'-the-wisps, and so prevent him from seeing a sufficient number of new people.

"Think it over," unless the nature of a salesman's proposition is such that a sale on first interview is impossible, is born of a presentation that lacks enthusiasm, that is void of a strong appeal to the imagination, that does not take the "you" attitude, or that comes to a chill, dead stop at the close when all the salesman's strength should be in action.

No matter what the line, any number of arguments can be marshalled against the "think it over" attitude, and the best of salesmen occasionally allow the interview to get to the point where they have to use these arguments to combat that point of view.

More often the salesman forestalls this inclination of the prospect to postpone decision. There is, after all, a very slight difference between the sincere "think it over" and the signed order. Just a little new enthusiasm, a little more snap in the presentation, a few terse stories to illustrate points, a little more of the

"you" attitude and a slightly stronger close will work wonders for the salesman who is getting a large proportion of delayed decisions.

12. *The "call-back."*—This brings us to the "call-back." The man selling staples and calling on his regular trade is continually calling back. "Let that go over now and see me on your next trip," is familiar to his ears. There is, of course, no question of the advisability of his calling back. He will always call on people who handle his line whether they buy or not. The specialty man is slightly different. He can call back or not, as he thinks best; specialty men are divided as to whether or not it pays to call back. One of the well-known specialty salesmen of the country says: "I seldom call back. The realization when I am talking to my man that this is absolutely my last chance at him—that I won't call back—makes me try my best to close him at that sitting." The salesman who knows when he is making his presentation that he will call back if necessary, is likely to weaken at the close and get the "call-back" habit. Most specialty men, however, while they emphasize the necessity of endeavoring to close the sale on first interview, agree that it does pay to call back in the case of those prospects who seem to be sincere.

The one great principle to be remembered in connection with calling back—and this applies to staple lines as well as specialty products—is that an entirely new presentation should be given from an entirely new angle. The "call-back" is to all intents and pur-

poses a new prospect. The question: Well, what decision have you come to on my proposition? will, with few exceptions, elicit the answer: I have been thinking that matter over, and I have come to the conclusion that I won't go in on that—for the present at least. Perhaps at some future time—and so on. The probability is that he has not given the salesman's proposition a single moment's thought since the previous call and that he does not want to do so now. The salesman should find an entirely new presentation for call-back purposes and should get his proposition before the "call-back" prospect from a new standpoint before allowing him to voice a decision at all.

13. *Kinds of selling requiring several interviews.*— The discussion of the disadvantages of calling back should not be understood to mean that a salesman, regardless of his proposition, should invariably make a complete selling talk and try to close the order the first time he faces a prospect. Most propositions, it is true, have inherent in them nothing that precludes the possibility of making a sale at the first interview. There are, however, a great many propositions which, owing to their nature and the nature of the conditions surrounding their sale, cannot, except in rare instances, be sold the first time the salesman meets the prospect.

Life insurance salesmen, for example, go out on what they call "cold canvass." That is, they select a number of individuals to call upon, go and discuss insurance with them in a general way, and incidentally

discover how many people are dependent upon the prospect and estimate his probable age and income. It is only after these details have been secured and the situation has been studied, that the life insurance salesman is in the best possible position to decide upon the amount and kind of insurance he will try to sell the prospect. Of course, this information can, if the lead to the prospect has been secured by the cooperation of one of his friends, be ascertained before the life insurance man's visit. If the lead is obtained from a more general source, however, a visit is necessary to uncover the desired information.

Salesmen selling special machinery and factory equipment must often continue to call upon their prospects until they are "in the market"; or they must call several times and become sufficiently friendly with the factory superintendent to be allowed to go thru the plant and gauge its needs. Not until they have done this, can they practise real creative salesmanship in the way of deciding just what equipment the plant could use to advantage, and in building a selling talk for particular items on that decision.

The salesman handling office filing devices or card systems for offices must generally delay his real selling talk until he has secured first-hand information as to the needs of a particular office. The advertising solicitor worthy of the name does not expect to walk in off the street and sell a block of space on his first interview with a prospect. His first call will be made to discuss the prospect's advertising problem in a

general way and to study his needs. Having clearly in mind the information received, he will make a second call to present a definite plan that will be advantageous to the prospect. The only object his first call can accomplish, so far as the prospect is concerned, is to create in the prospect's mind a certain amount of confidence in the solicitor.

It should be noted, however, that the first calls are not in the true sense selling interviews. A call back, in the sense in which the term is used in this Text can be made only after an interview at which a complete selling talk has been made and an effort to close a sale has resulted unfavorably. The kind of selling that requires several preliminary calls of the sort indicated differs only in detail and not in principle from selling which is done at the first interview. For it has been pointed out that no salesman, no matter what his line, should attempt to approach his prospect without first gathering all possible information concerning him. These preliminary calls are but a method of gathering that information. And in selling that requires several calls, just as in the kind that requires but one call, the salesman, once he has gathered all the necessary information and decided definitely upon the proposition he is going to put before the prospect, is ready to close. When he has delivered his selling talk the time has come when it is possible to secure the signature and he should make every endeavor to do so at that interview. He should avoid assiduously the necessity for a call back. He has

reached a point where it is possible for him to realize upon the time invested in preliminary work and the transaction should be closed without further loss of valuable time and without allowing the interest and desire created by his selling talk to wane.

14. *Creative salesmanship.*—The propositions handled by many salesmen are, by nature, indefinite and intangible; the actual details of the proposition must be different for each individual prospect. The advertising agency, for example, has nothing more tangible to sell than the services of a skilled organization. Naturally, the representative of the agency will include in his talk the qualifications of the members of this organization; but to stop there would accomplish little. Having instilled in the prospect a confidence in the ability of the organization to handle his advertising problem, the agency representative must switch to a definite advertising proposition especially planned to suit the needs of the individual prospect.

We have seen that the insurance man and very often the machinery salesman or the man presenting office filing devices, must select from the various propositions that his house could offer, one which is especially suited to that individual prospect.

Many representatives of printing houses merely travel from one large printing buyer to another and give a general talk on their firm's equipment and their ability to handle large orders, to do quality work and to make rapid delivery. They find a fair average of such buyers "in the market" and get an opportunity to

submit prices on work to be given out. This procedure creates little new business and keeps the salesman competing almost entirely on a price basis. The printing salesman worthy of the name will visit not only houses that regularly place large printing orders, but also those which could benefit by issuing a booklet or a catalog, or by entering upon a direct-by-mail advertising campaign. After talking equipment, reliability, quality and service, and having secured by one or more calls, an insight into the concern's needs, the salesman will focus his selling talk on a definite printing program for that individual house. His talk will be illustrated by booklet dummies and designs prepared especially for the purpose.

This is the sort of salesmanship which makes two orders grow where but one grew before, and which creates and develops customers for the house. There are few lines where it cannot be applied to advantage. It should be constantly borne in mind by the salesman selling anything more or less intangible, that not until a definite program has been presented for the prospect's approval, can any real desire be aroused, or any definite attempt be made to close a sale. This working from the general to the specific is one form of creative salesmanship.

At times it is quite possible to divert a prospect's thought from the proposition he has in mind to one that is more advantageous both to him and to the salesman. A short time ago a new addition to a plant in Rhode Island was being erected. The installation of

machinery was to be heavy and, as a consequence, every machinery concern in the East had a salesman on the ground. Blue-prints showing the installation had been distributed, and each salesman had the estimate of his house ready to present on a certain date. One of the salesmen, when he carried the blue-print away, thought he saw a chance for changes, both in lay-out and in type of machines, which would materially increase the output and cut costs. He took the matter up with the engineers at his company's home office and got out an entirely new set of drawings showing the new installation that he proposed. On the day set for the submission of bids every machinery salesman but this one submitted a bid on the installation as originally planned. This salesman, when his turn came, spread his new plans before the board of directors, explained the changes and improvements proposed, showed how costs would be cut and output increased, and won them over to the new arrangement. Both because there was not time to get out new blue-prints and secure new bids, and because the directors sincerely felt that the concern that discovered the opportunity should have the business, the contract to make the new installation was closed immediately.

Let us look at an example of this same sort of ability in a different field of selling. The mail-order man in a big Chicago house had telephoned an office-equipment concern for a new section of filing cabinets to take care of his expanding lists. "Never mind coming in," he said, "just send it along and mail me

your bill." "Oh, that's all right," replied the salesman, "I shall be passing your place and I shall just drop in anyhow." He called later, secured the order for the new section, and was apparently just preparing to leave when he said: "By the way, have you seen these new filing desks?" and without waiting for an answer, he drew out a special catalog and began pointing out casually just how filing desks could be used to better advantage than filing cabinets under the very conditions existing in the mail-order man's department. Before he got thru, the mail-order man had canceled the order for the section of filing cabinets and had ordered two filing desks to replace cabinets in taking care of his lists. Then he introduced his friend, the filing-desk man, to the head of the collection department and strongly recommended that the desks be tried there, too. Result: another order for a filing desk. The salesman came in ostensibly to get an order for $11 worth of filing equipment—and left with $120 worth of business. There can be little doubt that this achievement was the result of a carefully studied and well-worked-out plan which the salesman was probably using with little variation in all similar situations.

These are instances of creative salesmanship at its best. Opportunities for it are numerous in practically every line.

REVIEW

Discuss "After the sale" from the standpoint of helping the customer, securing his cooperation, preventing possible cancelation and leaving the right impression with him.

What is meant by a "bill starter" and why is it important?

Discuss "Think it over" and the "call-back."

Could you define creative salesmanship? How could the principle be applied in your business?

CHAPTER VII

HUMAN APPEALS THAT SELL

1. *Warm friendship versus cold service.*—While we have used the scientific method in discovering the principles of salesmanship, it should be borne in mind constantly that a sale is not a coldly scientific process. It is a friendly, red-blooded, man-to-man transaction. It cannot be accomplished by any scientific formula that neglects the human element. If one were to take the trouble to investigate, he would no doubt discover that certain definite principles might be followed by an aspirant for social position, but it is at the same time true that no one would expect to become a social lion merely by adhering to a set of coldly calculated rules. The same principle holds true in selling. In fact, there is a great deal of the social in successful selling.

There are certain definite methods of securing a prospect's friendly consideration, however, and there are a number of fundamental purchasing motives to which appeal may be made. These can be used effectively by the salesman who is sincere in his methods.

2. *Securing prospect's respect and admiration.*—The attitude of the average business man when a caller is announced, tends toward indifference. His resolve

is not to give more time than is necessary, but he is not antagonistic. On the other hand, unless there is some definite reason for it, he is not over-friendly. The moment a salesman appears, therefore, he sways the balance for or against himself. There are some men who are easy to turn down—to shunt off without a hearing. They seem to belittle their propositions, no matter how important these may be. There are others to whom even the confirmed "grouch" accords a courteous reception. They dignify their propositions. What is the reason for the difference? We must give here the same answers that we have given previously in a different connection: caliber, personality. We shall assume that the salesman is clean-shaven, well dressed and well groomed. The development of a man's intellect and his tastes, and the things to which he devotes himself outside of business, do much to determine his manner, expression, voice and actions. The surest way for a man to improve his salesmanship is to improve himself.

Once the approach has been made and the interview secured, there should be something in the poise, evident culture, well-modulated voice, thoughtful and courteous manner and well-groomed appearance of the salesman that will excite the admiration of the prospect. The salesman who would sell his goods to the prospect must first sell himself.

3. *Securing the prospect's friendship.*—The salesman is not satisfied merely with gaining the respect and admiration of the prospect. A man may be re-

spected, and even admired, and still be disliked. He wants an atmosphere of warm friendliness to pervade the entire interview. So much has been said of courage as a requisite of successful salesmanship, that the natural inclination on the part of the salesman, especially the young salesman, is to set his mouth in a grim, straight line and prepare to fight his prospect for an interview. Instead of doing this, he should ask himself when approaching his prospect, "Now what is there about this man that I can sincerely like and admire?"

The austerity with which most men meet salesmen is usually a shell beneath which there is a smiling good nature. The crustiest individual improves upon acquaintance, and usually gives evidence of good qualities. There is no prospect so grouchy that he is not loved by some people and sincerely liked by a great many others. Cheerfulness begets cheerfulness, and if the salesman has a sincere liking for the prospect tho nothing may be said, it will manifest itself and enable the salesman to "get under the prospect's skin," so to speak. The only way to handle men, to influence men, to sell to men, is to love them; and that love must be sincere; it cannot be successfully counterfeited. The real salesman likes people, both collectively and individually.

This same principle applies as regards the town in which the salesman is working. The young salesman out on his first trip is apt to find himself of an evening in a small town in an ill-kept hotel. He is likely to

yield to the impulse to write long letters to friends, telling them what an awful town he has struck, and concluding that he sees small chance of doing business in such a "one-horse burgh." The star salesman who has grown gray in the business can tell you the good points of every town he has been in. If its citizens are the least bit progressive, you may be sure he knows it and praises them for the ambition they show. If the town is small, he will be able to point out that at least it is growing and that it has more paved streets and a better lighting system than most towns of its kind. If its industries are small, nevertheless they are efficient. He is not at all surprised that able business men have picked the town to live and work in, and he does not wonder how they ever manage to remain there. It is absolutely essential that the salesman get in harmony with his environment and learn to like the town and appreciate the spirit of its citizens if he is to do business there.

4. *The sincere compliment.*—If we stop to think we shall realize that in many instances the chief reason for our liking some people is that they like us. If we recall the foremost characteristics of men—salesmen and others—who have won our confidence and friendship in business, we shall discover that their chief characteristic was interest in us—interest in us and in our business. While the compliment, however sincere, that comes early in the interview may arouse suspicion, the fact remains that pride in himself, in his business, in his achievements, and in the opinion that

others hold of him is inherent in every man. Why not, then, in the course of the interview, compliment your prospect sincerely on his firmness, his affability or his judgment, as the case may be? Why not remark admiringly upon the individual touches that makes his business stand out from others? Why not congratulate him upon his achievements in business and in other lines? Why not mention the high regard in which he is held by his townspeople?

We like to hear such things about ourselves. We are convinced that there is that about us which can be sincerely liked and admired. It is perfectly evident, then, that the same must be true of the other man—of the prospect. We recognize these good qualities in others, but somehow fail to mention them. The good salesman is a student of human nature; he understands these virtues and manages to mention them in the interview. One of the biggest elements of success in salesmanship is the ability to see and tactfully to acknowledge the good qualities of the prospective customer.

5. *Appealing to self-esteem.*—The exclusive-agency man who asks the dealer's opinion of his plan is merely making a very subtle appeal to his prospect's self-esteem. The story is told of a man who came out of the Southwest a few years ago to promote and secure financial backing for a development company, the profits of which would be large and almost certain. He felt that if he could get the name of just one big man in Wall Street as a subscriber to his

stock, the rest would be easy. He was not known in the financial district, however, and he knew that he would never get beyond his introductory remarks if it became apparent that he was trying to sell stock in a new promotion.

One evening, at an exclusive club where he had been a guest for some time, he managed to sit beside a big financier to whom he had been introduced some time previously, and with whom he had associated on several occasions. "Mr. Brown," he said, "I am going to ask a favor of you. I have rather a large proposition that I wish to submit. The trouble is that I am chiefly a practical man. I can swing the operating end after a company has been organized, but I am rather green about the financial end. Now, I don't know any of the big men down in the Street, but I have read and heard much about you and your enterprises. I wonder if you would give me a little advice." The big man leaned forward, smoothed out a scowl that had begun to form, and prepared to listen. Give him advice? Why, of course he would. He had thought at first, tho, that this man had intended trying to get him to subscribe to some stock. Simply discussing the thing as one man of business might with another was entirely different. The promoter unfolded his story, casually producing maps and reading here and there from the reports of experts. The financier showed more and more interest as the talk proceeded, asked a number of questions, and examined minutely the several documents produced.

"Why, man alive," he broke in, "that's a first-rate proposition. Anyone will listen to you on that. Of course, what you need first of all is money. I'll tell you what I'll do. Just put me down for a $25,000 block of that stock now. You don't need much advice on how to handle this thing. Just use my name to get in to see some of the fellows and tell them your story just as you told it to me."

Calling upon a man merely to get his advice or his friendship and cooperation, or for some other such motive, is an excellent way of paying him a compliment that will put the interview on a friendly footing.

6. *Acquisitiveness and desire for profit.*—The necessity of taking the "you" attitude, of appealing to the prospect's self-interest, of showing him clearly how he will be benefited, has been emphasized previously in these pages. The salesman who thinks principally of himself and his house during the interview probably will not make the sale; he will do well to forget his interests and think of the prospect's interests. In the last analysis we are all selfish and self-centered; we buy from selfish motives, and the salesman who can satisfy this desire for gain on the part of his prospect is appealing successfully to the most deep-seated of all buying motives.

This motive rests not alone upon the desire to get but also upon the desire to keep. Some years ago a collection of battle pictures of the Civil War, reproduced from famous paintings, was put on the market. The price for the series was fixed at five dollars. At

the end of six months, close to sixty thousand dollars had been spent for advertising and the receipts amounted to less than one thousand dollars. It was decided to cut the price to two dollars in order to sell out the edition and recover part of the loss. The plan was to spend no more money but simply to announce the reduction to the trade. But a clever advertising man who was called into consultation, conceived the plan of sending circular letters to the members of the Grand Army of the Republic and to the Sons of Veterans, inclosing a receipt for three dollars, made out in the name of the member and signed by the publishers, to apply on the purchase of the pictures. The price of the pictures, the circular stated, was five dollars, but the publishers wanted every member of these organizations to have them—hence the receipt which, accompanied by two dollars, would entitle the member to the pictures.

Here was something of value with which it was difficult to part. A signed receipt for three dollars is not easily thrown away. The result was that a great many of these men used their receipts either to get the pictures for themselves or to secure them for a friend, as a special favor.

This same appeal to acquisitiveness can be made in personal salesmanship. The dealer who is offered an exclusive agency feels that he has within his grasp something of value which he must relinquish if he does not sign up; the special price that will not be offered again is a strong incentive to immediate pur-

chase. The offer of a limited supply which necessitates restricting the special opportunity to a favored few, prompts that favored few to take advantage of the unusual conditions. The special arrangement of a wide assortment in small lots, which the salesman will make for today only, is tempting. Acquisitiveness may be defined as that quality in the human being which makes it difficult for him to relinquish anything of potential value.

Closely allied with this characteristic is the tendency of the average person to reach out eagerly for anything that is held back. The salesman who can create the impression that he is not especially anxious to sell can create in the prospect an anxiety to buy. There is something in human nature that makes us want what is not easy to get.

7. *Love of home and family.*—Business men may calculate to the last penny where their business is concerned, but ninety-nine out of every hundred are generous when it comes to the home and the comforts of the family circle. The average man will make all sorts of sacrifices, put forth extra effort and spend much time on trains, to provide a suburban home which he himself rarely has an opportunity to enjoy by daylight, solely in order that his wife and children may be comfortable. The piano salesman, when he learns that the prospect has a daughter, does not tell of the high-grade finish or the fact that this instrument is thirty dollars cheaper than a competitor's, but points out how, with a piano in the home, the daughter will

be happy and contented. The automobile dealer talks to the husband and father in terms of health and enjoyment for his wife and children and the prospect will buy if it is at all possible. The retail salesman's suggestion that one does not want to be anything but generous in the home is often sufficient to effect the sale of high-priced clothing or furniture of the finest quality. The love of family and the desire to do everything possible for their comfort and happiness in the home, are innate in every man.

8. *Imitation.*—Imitation is a powerful force behind advancement and progress. Children learn by imitating their elders. Their elders learn by imitating their associates. From childhood up, education consists, to a great extent, in imitating the actions of others. Despite all this, almost everyone resents being asked to imitate another. The suggestion that a person take a certain step solely because someone else has taken it, renders him antagonistic. Every salesman, at one time or another, has had a prospect say to him: "I don't care what these other fellows are doing. I don't care who has bought your proposition or who hasn't. Show me what it is and what it will do for me." The salesman's appeal to this buying motive, imitation, must, generally speaking, be veiled and subordinated to some more direct appeal.

9. *Varieties of imitation.*—There are two distinct kinds of imitation, conscious and unconscious. In the case of a young man occupying a subordinate position, the salesman may successfully suggest that he

imitate a big executive in the town and invest in what that man has bought. Or a salesman may persuade a dealer to stock up with a certain article just because big stores in other towns have done so. In either of these cases, the buyer would be consciously imitating another. If, on the other hand, a specialty salesman makes a certain point in favor of his proposition by using an indorsment letter from a prominent man, or relates a story which incidentally brings out the fact that some well-known individual has bought his proposition, or, in closing, states the terms on which several of the prospect's friends are paying and suggests that the prospect will doubtless wish to go in on the same terms, his principal object will be to create in the prospect's mind an impulse unconsciously to imitate these great men and friends. The imitating is done unconsciously. At most, the prospect feels that the caliber of the other buyers has tended merely to strengthen his decision.

The use of the names of prominent people who have bought homes in a residence park will influence further sales. The business man often joins an organization or supports a public movement because other prominent business men have pledged themselves. The fact that big concerns have installed a certain office device may cause less prominent concerns to do the same. In the sale of almost any commodity or service the names of those who have bought may awaken in the prospect an impulse to imitation.

10. *Some fundamental human instincts.*—Besides

the motives which have been discussed there are others to which an appeal may be made. A prominent psychologist says:

> The generally recognized instincts in man are as follows: fear, anger, shyness, curiosity, affection, sexual love, jealousy and envy, rivalry, sociability, sympathy, modesty, play, imitation, constructiveness, secretiveness and acquisitiveness.[1]

Some of these have been already considered; all are powerful motives impelling men to act. The salesman, consequently, as a skilled workman, should consider them his tools, employing first one, then another, or combining them according to the particular situation at hand. As deftness and certainty are thus acquired in the use of his various tools, the salesman acquires power, and selling becomes a real pleasure.

11. *Two avenues of appeal.*—There are two distinct avenues by which a salesman may approach the prospect for a favorable decision. He may, by pure logic and sound argument, appeal to the prospect's reason—to his intellect. Or he may, by positive suggestion and vivid word pictures, appeal to the prospect's imagination—to his emotions.

12. *Are we moved by reason or suggestion?*—We are prone to look upon man as a purely reasoning creature who comes to a decision by carefully weighing all arguments pro and con and deliberately deciding whether to do, or not to do, the thing under consideration. We are inclined to explain our own

[1] James R. Angell, Psychology, p. 349.

actions according to this theory, either because we thoroly believe it or because we try to hide what we consider to have been our weakness in coming to a decision without having gone thru a reasoning process. For, until recently at least, to allow the emotions to sway one even in an unimportant decision, was considered either childish or hysterical. If this were true, the logical appeal to the intellect would be the only one to use as a means of influencing intelligent people.

As a matter of fact, most of us seldom decide things by the reasoning process alone. The man who makes even a majority of his decisions solely by reason is indeed rare. Nor is it true that the ablest men are the most logical men. In fact, the logical individual is likely to be rather cold and austere. The imaginative man, who is ruled by his emotions rather than by his intellect, is usually most successful in handling men and inspiring enthusiasm and loyalty in those about him. In the crisis, the emotional appeal is most potent. "England expects every man to do his duty," was the appeal from Nelson's lips that won the battle of Trafalgar. "The old guard dies but never surrenders" was the slogan that gave every man in that glorious company the strength of ten. There is dynamic power in the thought that appeals to the emotions and translated into action it accomplishes a result that often seems superhuman.

It is by no means our intention, of course, to intimate that logic, argument and sound reasoning are not

essential and even vital in most, if not in all, sales talks. The best sales talks are, as a rule, a skilful blending of intellectual and emotional appeals.

13. *Appeal to the intellect.*—Arguing or reasoning with a prospect—that is, appealing to his intellect alone—causes deliberation and consequently delay. He considers the advisability of buying or not buying—whether to give in to the salesman's arguments or to resist them. He will weigh pro and con the qualities of the salesman's goods as compared with others. The possibility of not buying is always kept in mind.

If by cold logic and direct argument the salesman has convinced the prospect, against his inclination, that he ought to buy, it is possible that he will have created an antagonism which will render the closing of the sale impossible. Yet here again, we do not want to get the impression that the intellectual appeal has no place in selling. The salesman who has not studied his article until he can produce reason after reason why a logical man should buy it, is not likely to succeed. The professional purchasing agent and the department store buyer have competitors' goods in mind and will buy from the salesman, not because his proposition is a good one, but because it is a better one. Hence argument is necessary in selling to trained buyers. In the sale of scientific goods, the ability of those goods to do the work for which they are designed, and to do it well, must be demonstrated. Even in these cases, however, suggestion and the imaginative appeal are used at the close. The de-

partment store buyer must imagine the goods moving rapidly. The scientific man must picture himself using the article. As salesmen we should realize that, while the appeal to the intellect has its place, cold logic and abstract arguments of themselves close few sales. They must be accompanied by some imaginative appeal that will create in the prospect's mind a mental picture of his condition and needs and convert conviction into an impulse to buy.

14. *The imaginative appeal.*—A prominent and well-to-do lawyer in a New England town had in his office a veritable rattle-trap of a typewriter whose type was badly broken and out of alignment. A typewriter salesman had made several ineffectual attempts to get him to buy a new machine. The salesman pointed out that the old machine would not last much longer anyhow, and that its appearance was not in keeping with the dignity of the office, but all to no avail. The lawyer clung to the old machine. Then one day the salesman sat down in his own office and typed a page of legal cap on a disreputable old machine that he had taken in exchange; the typing was blotchy, broken and out of alignment. Next, he typed a similar page with one of the newest and best machines in stock. With this material in hand, he called upon the lawyer.

"Mr. Lawyer," he began, "when you go before a jury you are particular as to your dress. You make sure that your clothes are carefully pressed; that your shoes are polished; that your linen is immaculate—

and you would never think of appearing in court with your face unshaven. Why? You would be just as good a lawyer, no matter what your appearance. Your arguments would be just as forceful. But you are afraid that a poor appearance might lessen others' opinion of your ability—create a bad impression, in other words. Mr. Lawyer, you don't always get an opportunity to present your cases in person. Sometimes you are asked to submit briefs. How do you get up your briefs? Like this (showing the poorly typed sheet), so that their slovenly appearance detracts from the forcefulness of their arguments? Or like this (showing the neatly typed sheet), immaculate and pleasing in dress so that they produce a favorable impression even before they are read?"

This appeal to the imagination put the whole matter in a new light. The lawyer in his mind's eye saw the judge pick up his slovenly brief and frown as he glanced at it. He doubtless recalled close decisions where he had lost when, to his mind, his masterly brief had entitled him to win. The sale was made.

By the imaginative appeal is meant the introduction into the prospect's mind of some suggestion around which the prospect constructs a mental picture, with himself as the central figure. The result of the appeal to the intellect is analytical in its nature. The result of the imaginative appeal, on the other hand, is synthetic—it involves the relating of one thought to another and the building of the picture in the mind of the prospect. The salesman who furnishes a stimulus

for this synthesis is said to be appealing to the imagination.

An examination of selling talks will reveal the fact that many of them are aimed at the emotions. The vacuum cleaner salesman previously referred to, caused one of his prospects to picture herself going to the matinée, and the other to picture himself sallying forth each morning brushed by vacuum. The telephone man whose work has been described, painted for the merchant a vivid picture of clerks wasting time, and a more pleasant one of employes giving efficient service to customers. There is in New York a builder of suburban homes who goes to considerable expense in furnishing one of his newly constructed houses with fine rugs, period furniture, tapestry and expensive pictures. All prospects are taken first into this model home so that they may imagine themselves living there. Then, and not until then, they are shown the other houses; and they picture every one furnished like the model. This same man has instructed his salesmen never to use the word "houses," but always "homes," because the latter term holds the greater and more pleasurable appeal to the imagination.

In the great achievements of history, in the progress of invention and scientific discovery, we find imagination to have been the great stimulus to action. In selling, the imaginative appeal is effective because it stirs at once to action.

15. *Positive suggestion.*—The imaginative appeal

is made by introducing into the prospect's mind suggestions calculated to form associations, or associated ideas. When it was said that the business depression in the early part of 1914 was psychological, an extremely valuable explanation was given. All depressions are psychological to the extent that "hard times" and "tight money" talk will suggest hoarding, curtailment and retrenchment to the business man and the banker; and this attitude does much to increase the proportions of any depression there may be.

An order blank spread squarely in front of the prospect is a positive suggestion to him to sign. For this reason most salesmen, if their business requires a contract, place it before the prospect before they start their closing tactics. They also hand a pen to the prospect. Some salesmen prefer to reach for the prospect's pen, dip it into the ink and hand it to him. Either procedure is a positive suggestion to write—to sign.

That these suggestions can have any appreciable effect is difficult to believe until one recalls some of the marked results of positive suggestion. Someone coughing in an assemblage starts countless other coughs. A person sitting opposite another in a street car yawns, and lo! the observer is yawning, too. This will nearly always be so, even tho the observer has consciously and firmly set his mind against accepting the suggestion to yawn. One person looking intently upward will cause everyone who sees him to follow his gaze. If the person who stares per-

severes, it will be but a few minutes before he is surrounded by a curious crowd, gazing intently upward.

16. *Positive versus negative suggestions.*—A salesman who can remain in a happy mood and maintain a cheerful, smiling countenance before a prospect who is inclined to be cranky and crabbed, will eventually suggest cheerfulness and a happy mood to the customer and, before long, will get an answering smile because of the power of positive suggestion.

The form of a question can be made to suggest the answer. "This is a great proposition, don't you think so?" is a positive suggestion which will often bring an affirmative answer. "Do you think this is a good proposition?" is neutral and may be answered in either the affirmative or in the negative. "You don't think this is a good proposition?" is a negative suggestion that will bring a negative answer. In retail selling, "We have just secured some new neckwear that will harmonize with that shirt you have just purchased; I am sure you will be interested in looking at it," is a positive suggestion; while, "Is there nothing else I can do for you today?" suggests the answer, "Nothing else, thank you."

A garment salesman picking up his sample, scrutinizing one of the seams closely, and putting it down without a word, will cause his prospect to imitate the action. The prospect will discover nothing but a remarkably well-finished seam, which is exactly what the salesman wants him to discover. Thruout the

selling talk the salesman says: "You will get this," and "You will get that," and "These goods will start to move off your shelves the moment you get them in," instead of prefixing his remarks with "If you buy," because the positive assertion creates a positive suggestion that the prospect is going to buy.

17. *Use of motives and appeals.*—A great pianist running his fingers over the keyboard strikes a key here and a key there and creates a beautiful melody, and then, with sureness born of a thoro knowledge of his instrument, strikes the keys for a grand harmonious chord. Another might go thru exactly the same motions, might strike the same number of keys, might prepare for the chord in quite the same way, but, lacking the musician's fine knowledge of the instrument, would produce nothing but discordant sounds. The salesman, too, is a musician and his instrument the most difficult of all to master—man. He, too, by ceaseless study, by constant practice, and by the same love of his work that animates the musician, must learn to play upon the heart-strings of his prospects, picking a note here and a note there and striking full harmonious chords. He must not only master the technique of his profession but, actuated by a keen interest and a sincere love of humanity, he acquires a knowledge of human nature that enables him with sure strokes to touch upon the motives that move men to action, to reach their intellects with sound logic or to stir their emotions with forceful images. Here, then, is the real difference between the young sales-

man who, starting out with a thoro knowledge of the theory of selling, gets a few orders, and a big regularly producing star of the sales force—a knowledge of human nature.

REVIEW

Discuss the statement, "A sale is not a coldly scientific process; it is a friendly, red-blooded, man-to-man transaction."

Why should the salesman endeavor sincerely to like and admire each prospect?

Name as many as you can of the fundamental instincts to which the salesman may appeal. Which of these could be used in your business and how?

Are sales made mostly thru the buyer's intellect or thru his emotions?

What is the importance of the imaginative appeal? Illustrate.

Is an imaginative appeal possible in your line?

Discuss suggestion as it applies here.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER AND CALIBER

1. *Part of character and caliber in salesmanship.*—While there is a science of salesmanship, and while we can obtain from the experience of other successful salesmen rules and suggestions for getting in to see a prospect and for holding his attention and interest, the only real way to get in to see a man, after all is said and done, is to look and act like the kind of man who ought to be allowed to come in. The only real way to hold a man's attention and interest and to gain his confidence, is to be a man of sufficiently large caliber to command the attention and interest of the prospect, and to be a man of such a character as to compel his respect and admiration. In other words, the way to increase one's selling ability is to increase one's caliber and strengthen one's character.

2. *Thought, study and work.*—Curiously enough, only one of the qualifications essential to good salesmanship has to do directly with the goods to be sold; the others have to do with the salesman himself. The professional back-slapper type of salesman has given place to the keen analyst and close student of human nature. It is not surprising, therefore, that the qualities of the successful salesmen of today closely resemble those which mark successful men in general.

The salesman, however, must possess to a higher degree than most men, a pleasing personality and a keen sympathy for others so that he may establish in a short time that confidence and esteem, the cultivation of which men in other walks may leave to time.

Any list of the qualifications essential to salesmanship must be more or less arbitrary. Probably no two sales managers would give exactly the same answer if they were asked what qualities they look for in salesmen. A close study of various answers to this question, however, reveals the fact that the differences are largely matters of definition. The list here given is the product of the experience of many successful salesmen and sales managers.

The lack of some of the qualities enumerated need by no means discourage the new salesman. There are few who have all these qualities even fairly well developed. There are fewer who have no negative qualities offsetting their positive ones. The man who has all these qualifications developed to the highest possible extent does not exist. On the other hand, there are few salesmen who have not some of these qualities at least fairly well developed. The old theory that some of the qualities enumerated are inherent and cannot be acquired is fast giving way to a realization that, while it is more difficult to acquire some than others, education, training, favorable environment and constant endeavor will enable most of us to root out negative qualities and develop strong, positive ones to a satisfactory degree. Successful

salesmanship is largely a matter of a constant endeavor to improve oneself. However sales managers may differ as to the qualities they require in salesmen, they will all agree upon three: the habits of intelligent thought, constant study and hard work.

3. *Native ability.*—Native ability makes one man quick-witted and sharp, while his neighbor may be slow-witted and dull. Native ability includes aptitude—the faculty of grasping facts quickly. It includes intuition—the ability to sense instinctively the true status of a given situation. It includes initiative—the ability to originate, to plan and to carry out the plan. It includes adaptability—the power to fit oneself into changing environments and conditions. It includes resourcefulness—the ability to make successfully a move that is dictated by the circumstances, and to oppose the counter-moves of others.

While native ability has been termed inherent, and while it must be admitted that a good mental equipment is essential to salesmanship, natural ability can be greatly improved. Aptitude can be developed by study. Intuition is to some extent the result of the interpretation of experience. Initiative, the ability to originate and plan, is dependent to a great extent upon knowledge. Adaptability can be developed by throwing oneself into changing environments and by seeking the society of those from whom we can learn the art of adaptation. Resourcefulness can be cultivated if one will try faithfully to cope with every situation in his experience.

Some men are more brilliant than others. Some, by reason of temperament and past environment, are better fitted for one occupation than for another. But the native ability of any man can be developed along selling lines as well as along others, and any individual who possesses a fair amount of native ability can be trained to sell.

4. *Health.*—In many walks of life some men, thru an indomitable will, have succeeded in spite of bodily illness. They are the exceptions that prove the rule, however, and we can only speculate as to how much greater they might have been had bodily vigor been added to their mental attainments. It is more common to hear of men like Theodore Roosevelt, who, by following a strict system of right living, right breathing, right eating and right exercise have built for themselves a strong body.

A salesman, probably more than anyone else, should have a strong, healthy body and mind. He will find it difficult to influence and dominate strong and healthy people unless he himself is in the best of condition both physically and mentally—and one's physical condition has much to do with one's mental attitude, especially as regards optimism and cheerfulness. The salesman's arduous duties require a large daily supply of strength and vitality, and it is just as much a part of his duty to himself and to his house to see that this vitality is constantly renewed as it is to know his goods.

A salesman should not be satisfied merely because

he is not actually sick in bed. Many a sallow cheek could have color in it. Many a blurred eye could be clear and bright. A little more fitness for the fray would put spring into many a dragging step. The salesman should be satisfied with nothing less than an attitude, an appearance and a carriage that will indicate the top notch of bodily vigor.

Emerson says: "Physical exuberance, surcharge of arterial blood, a strong heart and a bounding pulse —these are the bases of the powers that make men and nations great. In the last analysis, great human achievements rest on perfect physical health."

5. *Preparedness.*—Two salesmen were talking together in the lobby of a large hotel. One of them, who had been selling paint successfully for one concern for fifteen years, confided to the other that he had not done a stroke of business on the trip he was then making, and announced his intention of going back to his headquarters in Cleveland and resigning. The other, who was a salesman of the new school, having ascertained that this man's paint concern was an old establishment, but little known, began to ply the older man with questions as to what points of superiority his paints had over others, how they compared in price with better known paints, and what reasons there were, in his opinion, for a person to buy his paint in preference to the more widely advertised brands. The paint salesman was unable to answer any one of these questions! He did not know! He had just been dropping around on the dealers in that section

for the last fifteen years, selling them paint, and now he suddenly found himself unable to sell them any more. That was all he knew. Before the conversation ended he had made a note of the questions that the younger man had asked, and had decided to go back to his concern, not to resign, but to get the answers to those questions; then, he resolved, he would take another swing around the circuit. That man was unprepared.

Senator Beveridge, who was once a salesman, says that being prepared is the secret of most successes in this world; that fate seldom sides with the unequipped. To succeed in selling anything, the salesman must prepare himself by first acquiring a knowledge of the principles of his craft, and then mastering the details of his proposition. He must have his selling points marshalled and under full control. He must be prepared to answer any questions that may arise. The fact that a salesman has had a good preparation does not mean that his study should cease when he begins to work, any more than one would expect a good lawyer to stop reading law after starting practice. Knowledge of goods and of selling points does not come by intuition or inspiration, but by study and application.

Nor should the salesman's study stop when he knows the selling points. When a salesman is not traveling, he should take time to study the goods he is selling. If he has not come up thru the manufacturing department and is not familiar with the plant, he would do well to spend some of his time there.

There was once a salesman who sold a line of toys for five years before he learned that great care was taken in the factory to keep the coloring matter free from poison.

A knowledge of the stock room, of how orders are handled, packed and shipped, and of how collections are made, will enable the salesman to discover whether or not a customer's last order was shipped promptly and whether or not he paid for it, before he calls on him for another.

One would suppose that no salesman ever did neglect these things, but buyers in various lines will testify that the number of salesmen who call upon them unprepared—without a proper knowledge of their goods —is startlingly large. Buyers in department stores say that it is quite common for a salesman to call for a second order before the first has been shipped. Often instead of being fully acquainted with the facts, the salesman is surprised to learn from the buyer that there has been a delay.

The question very often put to buyers: "What kind of salesman secures your friendship and your business?" invariably brings the response: "The man who knows his business and tells me something new about it, and who brings me new ideas about mine." This answer seems to be especially applicable in the case of highly competitive lines and would seem to indicate the way to success for the salesmen who must compete with others on an even basis as regards price, quality and service. There are any number of men soliciting

orders for printing, but there are comparatively few among them who know enough about printing to furnish the buyer with fresh ideas or to originate plans for him. The printing buyer, nine times out of ten, does not know as much as he should about printing and therefore welcomes the man who can increase his information. He shows his appreciation by giving such a man his business, sometimes even paying a higher price than he ordinarily would pay. The engraving salesman who knows his business and can correctly interpret the buyer's ideas in regard to the finished cut is as successful as he is rare.

But the salesman's information should include more than this. He should know what raw materials enter into the product he is selling, the history of those raw materials and the processes that they go thru. The retail lace salesman can arouse in the prospect a very keen interest if he will but read up on laces. The grocery salesman who can talk about growing and canning processes is a man who will interest the dealer. The clothing salesman who knows something about long and short staple wool, the processes in the making of fine worsteds, dyeing in the piece and in the thread, and the small details that make for quality in a garment, can interest the buyer and, incidentally, point out some of the superior qualities of the garment that he is selling.

Most sales managers today provide a more or less thoro and systematic training for salesmen who join their organizations, give them a fair working knowl-

edge of the selling points of the goods they are to sell, and furnish them with the plan of a selling talk that has proved successful in practice. If the salesman is employed by a house that does not do these things, or is selling for himself, he must be his own sales manager to the extent of recognizing and selecting the selling points of his goods and planning an effective selling talk. In this connection it would be well to read the portion of Part II of this Text that treats of the training of salesmen, the building of a sales manual, the selection of selling points and the planning of a selling talk.

6. *Ambition.*—Some men dream of success and others will frankly admit that they are ambitious, but the men who will go forth in earnest and struggle unceasingly to satisfy their ambition are few and far between. This kind of ambition is a prime requisite of salesmanship. Salesmen should take ambition for their running mate; they should be imbued with a steadfast purpose of achieving something worth while. The salesman's ambition to make a record is often the means of his discovering new methods of increasing sales, new avenues of approach and new uses for the product. Complacency, on the other hand, never increased business. When a salesman's self-satisfaction becomes indifference and indolence he is on the road to dismal failure.

The spur of ambition should continually urge the salesman forward. Did he have a large volume of sales today? Make tomorrow's better. Did he se-

cure some particularly large single orders? How can he make the next ones larger? Has he discovered a new class of prospects for his goods? Are there any that he has missed? Most men achieve little because they attempt little. On the other hand, the more one accomplishes the more one becomes capable of accomplishing. In order to increase his capacity, therefore, a man need only combine ambition with application.

7. *Application.*—As the term is here used, application includes the determination to carry things thru—a capacity for hard work, stick-to-it-iveness, perseverance, energy. The difference between success and failure in any line is found largely in the degree of application. There is, perhaps, no profession where this is more apparent than in salesmanship. A man of fair intelligence and great energy will succeed in the selling field, whereas a man of brilliant mind and little energy is likely to fail miserably.

8. *Observation.*—A salesman arrives in a town. He should have his eyes open and begin his observations immediately. He climbs on a 'bus, and is driven to his hotel. By the time he reaches it he should have observed something that will enable him to say a good word about the town. He immediately gets out his sample case and walks up the street to his first prospect. From the moment he gets into his prospect's place of business, or in the case of a retail salesman, the moment the prospect approaches the counter, various signs that he should read are in evidence; he should train his powers of observation to see

and interpret them. He should be able to make a quick mental note of the surroundings, of the prospect's appearance and of the conditions in which he finds him. He should be able to determine whether the circumstances are auspicious for a favorable approach. He should observe the tone of his prospect's voice, the expression of his eye and his general bearing, for these things will indicate to the salesman his method of procedure. A rapid estimate of this kind will enable the salesman to adjust himself to the situation without delay. Above all, he should be quick to note when the prospect has reached a favorable decision, and strive to close the sale. This power of quick observation can be acquired and developed by practice.

9. *Tact.*—Such observation as has just been mentioned is closely associated with another important quality—tact. A salesman traveling for a clothing house approached one of the partners of a firm that had been handling his line regularly. He was met with a volley of abuse directed at both himself and his goods. While he stood there half convinced that the outburst had no foundation but the customer's state of mind, and waiting for some definite complaint on which to hang an offer of adjustment, the speaker ended abruptly with: "Besides, I'm not buying that line any more. My partner has taken over the management of that department."

The salesman, seeing the partner in the front part of the store, hurriedly excused himself with the statement

that he would adjust the matter, approached the other partner and said: "Mr. Brown, your partner tells me that you are buying men's clothing this year. Shall I bring my trunks in here, or do you want to walk across the street to the hotel with me now where I have them all opened up?" "Oh," replied the second partner, "I guess I'll walk over to the hotel with you."

That was tact. The salesman conjectured that the attitude of the first man was due to the fact that he had not obtained a satisfactory profit the previous year, and not to any fault of the goods themselves. He further decided that to show his goods in the store where the aggrieved partner might interfere would endanger the sale, so he threw into his question to the second man a strong positive suggestion that he go over to the hotel.

Tact is defined as the ready power of appreciating and doing what is required by circumstances. It is really the outward expression of intuition. It is the attribute that enables a man to deal with others without friction, to adapt himself to circumstances and to do the right thing in the right place. The tactful salesman humors his customers' opinions when they are not antagonistic; he governs his manner and speech to suit the peculiarities of the man with whom he is dealing. He bases his selling talks on his knowledge of his customer's likes and dislikes. He avoids such topics of conversation with his customer as politics and religion. Tact, in short, is a sort of sixth

sense—a combination of wisdom and good judgment —which enables the salesman at a glance to size up the man and the situation in which he finds him and to take the right steps to secure an immediate order and establish future cordial relations.

A great sales manager has said that there are three kinds of salesmen: Men who always say the right thing at the right time and know their reasons for doing so—they are big, steady producers; men who occasionally say the right thing at the right time, but who have no definite reason for saying it—they are spasmodic producers; men who never say the right thing at the right time because they have neither intuition nor tact—the few sales they make are made by main strength.

Some fortunate people are born with tact highly developed; others have it, but allow it to fall into disuse; still more must acquire it; and there are a few who are neither born with it nor acquire it. Lack of tact, however, is largely a matter of thoughtlessness and selfishness—of being so self-centered as to be unable to get the other person's point of view.

Tact should be cultivated, for it is as essential to success as knowledge. As a matter of fact, without tact a great deal of knowledge goes for nothing. A simple, practical and effective rule for developing tact and the personal magnetism that goes with it, is for the salesman to strive to do or say something in each interview that will leave the prospect feeling better for having met him and influence him to give the sales-

man a warm, friendly reception when he comes again.

10. *Concentration.*—The sun's rays do not burn until they are brought to a focus. The success of the salesman results not so much from effort as from an intelligent direction of effort, which, in turn, presupposes concentration—concentration on the acquiring of desirable habits; concentration on the planning of the work; concentration on the goods to be sold, and concentration on each individual sale. This is a quality that must be acquired by constant practice. David Graham Phillips, a close student of human nature, said:

> Most of us cannot concentrate at all; any slight distraction suffices to disrupt and destroy the whole train of thought. A good many can concentrate for a few hours, for a week or so, for two or three months; but there comes a small achievement and they are satisfied; or a small discouragement, and they are disheartened. Only to the rare few is given the power to concentrate steadily, year in and year out, thru good and evil events or reports.

Concentration, or singleness of purpose, is a distinguishing characteristic of success in selling or in any other field.

Most propositions are big enough and important enough to justify a salesman's giving to them his entire time and attention; only by giving both freely can he reach the highest degree of efficiency. Many men could reach at least a fair measure of success if they would but develop the power of continuous concentration. Because they do not develop that power, because they hammer all around the nail instead of

hitting it on the head, they continue to sell their services for just enough to enable them to eke out an existence. The salesman who would be successful today must learn to concentrate all his thoughts upon the work in hand. As John D. Rockefeller says:

> If you are in earnest to the innermost fiber of your body, there is no power that can hold you back from the object you strive to attain.

11. *Courage.*—It takes courage to be honest under all circumstances; to apply the whip of ambition relentlessly; to look the tenth man in the face with a smile after having been turned down by the preceding nine—not with a smile that ends at the teeth, but with one that extends right to the heart; to persist in the face of difficulty; to refrain from overindulgence; to force oneself to work at top speed; and to refuse to let one's mentality slumber during working hours. Courage, in this connection, is synonymous with a determined will—a will that is akin to audacity, that is fearless to the verge of recklessness, that will not yield to seemingly insurmountable difficulties.

Want of courage—fear—mars the first moment of the salesman's interview; makes the voice shake, when it should be round and full; causes the mouth to droop at the corners, when it should be smiling; and robs the handshake of its grip. Fear of the prospect will cause the salesman instinctively to dislike him, prevent him from carrying out carefully laid plans and greatly weaken the close. Most young salesmen have this fear at the start. They can be successful only in so

far as they overcome it; and just as soon as they overcome it entirely—provided they have the necessary qualifications—they will join the ranks of the big producers. No salesman should allow a lack of courage to stand between him and big business success.

12. *Honesty.*—As a business proposition, it pays a man to be honest—with himself first of all, and then with his firm and his customers. Modern business has raised the standard of business ethics and has made honesty both popular and profitable. The salesman, in asking himself whether or not he is an honest man—and we should always remember that the only true answer to that question must come from within—should bear in mind that there are various grades of dishonesty. Of course, it takes a desperate man actually to appropriate his concern's funds; and a small man to pad an expense account. But that man is dishonest as well who knowingly oversells a customer; who makes loose promises to secure an order; who fails to correct a misunderstanding for fear of jeopardizing an order; who fails to get a sample room when he knows that his negligence will hurt the interests of his house; who waits over a train or two to have the company of a fellow salesman to the next stop—or so as not to break up a congenial card party; who carries a side line; or who spends his spare time in such a manner as to give his house below-par service. A salesman cannot do any of these things and retain his self-respect and the confidence and esteem of his concern and his customers.

There are some salesmen who are known as "one-trippers." Their first trip to a territory results in a fine volume of business, but eventually there comes a cancelation because of overselling, a protest that the salesman's promise of an exclusive agency was not kept, and complaints everywhere of shady dealings. The salesman is not in a position, under such circumstances, to go over the territory again, and the chances of future business for the concern are doubtful. These offenses are not tolerated by the right kind of employers—and any other sort cannot buy the services of self-respecting men.

The truly honest salesman gives his house the best that is in him, tells nothing but the truth about his goods, never oversells, and can go over his territory again and again, gathering an increasing host of friends for himself and his concern on each trip. He is a "repeater."

Above all, no one should sell a proposition that is not strictly honest in every particular. The demand for able salesmen to sell honest propositions so far exceeds the supply that there is no reason for a man's soiling his hands with a dishonest business. A man cannot sell a proposition in which he does not believe and at the same time respect himself and hold the esteem of his fellow men. Furthermore, dishonest success must always be counted a failure. A salesman's honor is his best selling asset.

13. *Confidence.*—A salesman should have confidence in himself, in his house and in his proposition.

Before a sale can be made, the prospect must be imbued with confidence in all three. To inspire that confidence in others the salesman must first possess it himself. His success will be in direct proportion to his estimate of his own ability, his belief in the firm that he represents, and his faith in his goods.

A man who makes a conscientious study of his own physical, moral and mental characteristics, with a firm determination to correct his faults and to increase his efficiency, and who is at all successful in carrying out that determination, acquires a justifiable confidence in himself that will enable him to take up any proposition with reasonable assurance of his ability to carry it thru to success.

Careful distinction should be made, however, between confidence and conceit. Conceit is rooted in ignorance and a misapprehension of facts. Conceit thinks it can, but it really cannot. Confidence is intelligent faith based on facts. Confidence believes it can and the results demonstrate the truth of that belief. There is little hope for the salesman who does not believe in himself. The salesman who is easily discouraged when he is turned aside will never win. Half the strength of the giant is in the conviction that he is a giant.

Confidence in the proposition is not an easy thing to maintain. The salesman usually starts out with absolute confidence in his line as his principal selling asset. But soon, perhaps, a glance into a competitor's sample room reveals virtues in the competing line that he

does not see in his own; a few buyers inform him of the superiority and lower prices of still other lines—and before long we find him writing in to the house about the shortcomings of his line and the superiority of those whose competition he has to fight. Or, if he is a specialty salesman, a few of his prospects begin to ridicule the idea that his proposition is a necessity for them, and his confidence begins to weaken—ever so little at first, but eventually sufficiently to make him despondent and send him out half-whipped every day.

Many a salesman begins each working day by "selling himself" before he presents his proposition to anyone else. Such a man will go over every selling advantage of his goods, present his proposition to himself just as he would to the most obstinate buyer, and prove to himself absolutely that his proposition is the best on the market, that his house is the best in the business, and that no one is so capable of selling his line as he is himself. A preliminary like this refreshes the salesman's memory on the essential points of his selling talk, vitalizes him for the day's work and rekindles confidence in himself, in his line and in his house.

Confidence in the house that employs him is an immensely valuable asset to the salesman—confidence in his firm's financial condition, in its ability to keep its promises, in the character and the ideals of the men at the head, and in its desire to deal honestly with everybody. Thoro confidence increases the salesman's re-

spect and liking for his employer, promotes his general satisfaction and contentment, gives him assurance of solid backing, and adds dignity to his work. Furthermore, if he realizes that his firm is composed of men who have put out his line and put their money and reputations behind it, he will realize, despite the opposing claims of other lines, that his goods are right.

14. *Enthusiasm.*—Enthusiasm is confidence in action; all great achievements in the world's history have been due to enthusiasm and without it little of importance has been accomplished. In the salesman it is the white heat that fuses all the other essential qualities into one effective whole. Enthusiasm needs only direction to turn it into success; and no matter how big the setback may have been, any ground can be regained if enthusiasm is not lost. Enthusiasm is the life of the interview. The salesman who is truly enthusiastic talks as if he meant what he said because he does mean every word. He is working for the love of the game. He would rather be selling those goods than doing anything else. He is fired with an intense desire to impart his ardor to others. Enthusiasm makes a salesman "talk shop" whenever there is the slightest chance of effecting a sale. It enables him to forget disappointments and failures and to start afresh with renewed determination to succeed.

The salesman must impart his enthusiasm to the prospect or there will be no sale. He may keep his enthusiasm well under control, but it must be there.

Enthusiasm is the force that grips the attention of the customer, that impresses him with the salesman's sincerity, that makes him forget inhibiting thoughts, and that carries the presentation past all obstacles to a successful consummation.

Enthusiasm is the quality, more than all others, that makes a salesman oblivious to difficulties, renders vital his selling efforts, makes him optimistic and forceful, turns apparent defeat into success, creates a bond of sympathy between buyer and salesman and changes prospects' apathy to interest. It is enthusiasm that makes personal salesmanship the vital factor that it is in the distribution of the world's goods.

15. *Loyalty.*—Closely associated with honesty, confidence and enthusiasm is a fourth requisite of good salesmanship, a higher product, which develops when men are associated in groups. This essential is loyalty. The salesman should be loyal to both his house and his customers; as he stands between the two, he should look after the best interests of both. Loyalty involves something more than this, however.

A certain concern which is today firmly and successfully established had to ask its salesmen, during the early days of its existence, to be satisfied with little or no compensation for a period of almost six months. In other words, it asked them to stay on the firing line selling goods, and practically support themselves without the company's aid. Eighty per cent of the men stayed and worked without any loss of confidence or enthusiasm even under these condi-

tions. That was an example of loyalty at its best. The twenty per cent who quit were doubtless honest and probably had confidence in the goods and were enthusiastic, but their loyalty was not equal to the severe test to which it was put. It would seem, then, that there is something which distinguishes loyalty from the other essential qualities. Loyalty begets loyalty, and the salesman who is loyal to his house and to his customers will find that they are also loyal to him.

16. *Optimism.*—There are two kinds of optimists—the man who absolutely refuses to recognize that anything is wrong in the world; and the man who recognizes that lots of things are wrong, but who has a cheerful faith that they will be made right and that he can be a power toward that end. The first, ostrich-like, hides his head from surrounding dangers and tries to believe they do not exist—he is a false optimist. The second is a true optimist.

Lack of ambition, indifference, laziness and satisfaction with ease and quiet are not optimism. To sit still and be content to see other men forge ahead—that is false optimism. To recognize that effort alone can bring improvement, that progress is attained only thru struggle, and to throw oneself into the struggle, and to glory in it—that is real optimism.

True optimism will inspire the salesman with a feeling of cheerfulness and a determination always to make the best of things. Enthusiasm presupposes optimism and optimism generates enthusiasm. Some

one has said that a green man can learn to sell goods, but a blue man cannot. The general passenger agent of the Lackawanna Railroad showed his appreciation of optimism and cheerfulness when he issued to his ticket sellers the order: "A smile with every ticket."

17. *Imagination.*—Two men see a picture of one of the famous German siege guns. To one it represents just a great, cumbersome gun. To the mind of the other it conjures a picture of the assassination of the Austrian Grand Duke, ultimatums exchanged between European nations, the mobilization of armies, the German invasion of Belgium, the hundred-mile battle line on the French frontier, ruined cathedrals, devastated towns, thousands of homeless peasants. The first man possesses no imagination. The second has an imagination of great range and intensity. The former would not make a salesman; the latter would. All things must be pictured in the mind before they are realized, and if the salesman would appeal to the prospect's imagination, he must first be able to picture himself doing so, and then he must be able to get a clear image in his own mind of the picture he intends to paint for the prospect. If the salesman has no imagination himself, he cannot hope to appeal to the imagination of the prospect.

18. *Education.*—The selling of a commodity that appeals to highly cultured, well-educated people calls for a salesman of culture and of some book learning. The selling of a technical appliance usually calls for a technically trained mind. A man of little or no

polish and small book learning may do fairly well in selling an ordinary article, but the salesman in any line should be an educated man. For education, in its broadest sense, means a knowledge of natural forces, of human nature, and of things that are going on about us in the world, as well as the power to interpret them. Many a man who has never had more than a grammar-school training possesses a true education, in this sense of the word. A person who will seriously consider the qualifications that have been enumerated in this chapter, and who succeeds in acquiring a reasonable number of them will have received a liberal education in the process, even tho he may have had little previous schooling.

19. *Voice.*—If the salesman has a strident voice and a harsh manner the prospect will probably be prejudiced against him, while a man of fine sensibilities will certainly be repelled. A clear, full, soothing voice will do much to predispose the prospect in favor of the salesman. No man who must speak a great deal should neglect the cultivation of his voice. He should be particularly careful to keep it, if possible, in a pleasantly low range.

There are many methods for training and cultivating the voice. One that is known to produce satisfactory results is to read poems aloud. Another is to take lessons from a vocal instructor. The salesman should be particularly careful to cultivate a sympathetic tone of voice. He should learn to direct the tone forward toward the teeth and lips, at the same

time allowing it to pass naturally thru the nasal passages. Such tone-production is conducive to a good "carrying quality," and also is a preventive of what is known as "speaker's throat," which results from straining the voice. The large amount of speaking required of the salesman causes a dry throat and a rasping tone unless proper care is taken.

20. *Appearance.*—It goes without saying that a salesman should always be well dressed and well groomed. Slovenliness prejudices a prospect against him and his proposition. His clothing should be fresh pressed and his linen spotless. His shoes should be of the best, with straight heels, and should be kept well shined. The salesman must be careful of his teeth, his hair and his finger nails, and he should never appear before a prospect with a day's growth of beard on his face.

The keynote of the salesman's dress should be unobtrusiveness. Any exaggeration in his costume is detrimental to his obtaining the best results. Just as the finest French plate-glass is the kind that is entirely unobtrusive to the eye, so the best dressed man is he whose apparel attracts no attention to itself.

21. *Personality.*—Personality is that indefinable something which makes the presence of one man welcome and the presence of another unwelcome. Combined with sympathy, and the ability to see the other fellow's point of view, it is the prime factor in the quick creation of confidence. Personality is that quality which definitely characterizes a person and

distinguishes him from another, not by his nature, or by the way his features are molded, but by his expression, his manner and his actions. Personality includes poise, that elusive characteristic which is more than mere calm or assurance, and which enables its possessor to appear to advantage, and to be at ease under any circumstances.

Personality, as such, cannot be acquired apart from those elements of which it is composed. Personality is the sum total of one's mentality, education, habits of thought and experience.

22. *Self-analysis and improvement.*—The salesman should possess the ability to review carefully his work at the close of each day, and decide just where and how he has been weaker than he should have been. There is some reason for the loss of every sale. The salesman may not be at fault, but it is safer for him to assume that he is and to endeavor to put his finger upon his weakness. Such a practice will foster in him the habit of holding himself strictly accountable for errors. He should also at the same time review the essential qualifications of a salesman and decide in which of them he is lacking. During this period of introspection, the salesman should be thoroly honest with himself. The man who has too much self-conceit to admit his mistake when he is at fault, cannot profitably perform this task of introspection. Such a man is as useless in selling as in any other occupation. The salesman can develop only by earnestly striving to discover and eliminate his negative qualities, while

at the same time he makes every effort to strengthen his positive ones. A prominent New York firm has devised a self-analysis chart—produced below—which was prepared for the special benefit of those salesmen who wish to carry on a particularly complete and systematic introspection along the lines that have been suggested.

SELF-ANALYSIS CHART

Analyze yourself by making your own standing with regard to each of the qualities listed below. For convenience use the following scale:

1. Nearly perfect.
2. Good.
3. Above the average.
4. Average.
5. Below the average.
6. Deficient.
7. Almost wholly lacking.

Obviously the qualities listed are not all equally important. Their relative importance depends, in part, on the work you are doing or for which you are being considered.

Your analysis, when completed, should show a few "1's," a large number of "2's" and "3's," a smaller number of "4's," very few "5's," and no "6's" or "7s." Remember that one or two striking defects, no matter how excellent a man's other qualities may be, are often enough to disqualify him for a high grade of duties. You should endeavor as quickly as possible to remove the "5's," "6's" and "7's" from your analysis.

I. Physical Qualities.
   (a) Chiefly inherent—subject, however, to some cultivation.
      1. Proper size and structure of body .....
      2. Correct conformation of face and head .....
      3. Physical vitality .....
      4. Correct age (depending on position).....
   (b) Chiefly acquired and subject to cultivation .....
      5. General good health .....
      6. Erect carriage .....
      7. Impressive and pleasing facial expression .....
      8. Pleasing voice and enunciation .....
      9. Personal neatness .....
      10. Appropriate dress and pleasing appearance .....

11. Bodily control (e. g., ability to sit quietly and absence of nervousness) .....
12. Quickness of bodily movements .....

II. Mental Qualities.

(a) Chiefly inherent.

13. Quickness of thought .....
14. Imagination .....
15. Good memory .....
16. Reasoning ability .....

(b) Chiefly acquired.

17. Good elementary education .....
18. Higher general education .....
19. Special education in business .....
20. Special education in salesmanship .....
21. Habits of thought and study .....
22. Office experience .....
23. Selling experience .....
24. Executive experience .....
25. Correct conception of the proposition .....
26. Detailed knowledge of the proposition .....
27. Accuracy of observation .....
28. Concentration .....
29. Sound judgment .....
30. Resourcefulness .....
31. Ability to talk well .....
32. Ability to write well .....
33. Organizing ability .....
34. Attention to details .....
35. Habits of punctuality .....
36. Ability to develop .....
37. Breadth of view .....
38. Fair-mindedness .....

III. Temperamental Qualities.

(a) Chiefly inherent.

39. Will power .....
40. Energy .....
41. Liking for your work .....

(b) Chiefly acquired.

42. Courtesy .....
43. Tact .....
44. Truthfulness .....
45. Integrity .....
46. Loyalty .....
47. Enthusiasm .....
48. Industry .....

49. Self-control
50. Self-confidence
51. Stability
52. Courage
53. Aggressiveness
54. Ambition
55. Sincerity
56. Cheerfulness
57. Good business habits
58. Good personal habits
59. Poise
60. Helpfulness
61. Initiative
62. Discretion
63. Willingness to accept suggestions
64. Power to dominate
65. Persuasiveness
66. Fixity of purpose
67. Sympathy

REVIEW

Discuss the development of character and caliber as applied to selling and to business success generally.

Have you the habits of thought, study and work?

Go over this chapter again, deciding which characteristics you possess, which ones you lack, and which of those you have can be further developed. Carefully note any negative characteristics you may discover and plan to eradicate them.

Mark yourself on the self-analysis chart given, actually putting the figures and totals down. Then in two or three months you may mark yourself again, noting specific improvements and improvement in the total.

CHAPTER IX

THE SALESMAN'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. *A salesman's responsibility.*—The salesman on the road is, to a great extent, a business executive and, as such, is master of his own time. While a sales manager may be able to check him up by the salesman's reports, by the volume of his business and by previous records in the territory, it is quite possible for the salesman, if he will, to pass muster without giving his best efforts to his house. Probably nothing more sharply separates the subordinate from the executive than the fact that the average subordinate has an inclination to shirk and that he needs supervision, while the average executive has a natural inclination to put forth his best efforts and is not likely to quit at the first opportunity. The salesman should be proud of being in the executive class and should shoulder cheerfully the responsibility that his position entails. He is on his honor; and be it known that the vast majority of salesmen, tho under the constant temptation to loaf on the job, do shoulder their responsibility cheerfully and warrant the trust that is placed in them.

Very often a salesman who is working on a straight-commission basis feels that he has a perfect right to

stop work for a day, or even more, if he so desires. "My compensation stops when I stop," he argues; "if I am satisfied why should the house kick?" But commission men are coming more and more to realize that while they may have a legal right to act on this theory, they certainly have no moral right to do so. For the house, in expectation of the business that they are presumably going to bring in by working every day, has provided certain facilities in the factory for the production of the commodity sold and made definite arrangements in the office for the handling of the salesman's orders. If the anticipated number of orders does not come in, the expenses are not automatically reduced; they go on about the same as before. Consequently, the cost of handling the individual order is higher and the net profit is reduced. If any considerable number of the sales force took it into their heads to rest up for a couple of days, it is quite possible that the house would suffer an appreciable loss. Commission men are beginning to see things in this light and to assume the responsibility.

In this connection, Hugh Chalmers tells of the standard he set for himself when he was selling on straight commission. He had to pay his own expenses, of course, so he always set out to earn the entire month's expenses during the first twelve days. This method provided an incentive to hustle the first part of the month so as not to run over the allotted time for covering expenses. Whenever he kept within his time-limit, his commission during the rest of the

month was clear profit. The realization of this fact was an incentive to hustle during the last half of the month in order that the month's profits might be as large as possible. On the last day of each month he always strove to close a large volume of business, since every sale that was closed counted on the profits of that month, whereas, if a sale were delayed a day, the commission had to go toward the expenses of the next month. There is a fascination in such a method. The love of playing a game is inherent in all of us, and the salesman who would work at maximum efficiency would do well to set for himself some such standard as Mr. Chalmers' and play up to it.

2. *Salesman's time and its use in business.*—The salesman may well apply some of the principles of efficient management to his selling work. There is no other phase of business in which there is so much waste motion as there is in selling. Materials used in manufacturing are routed thru the factory. The progress of the work is systematic and direct. The material does not zigzag back and forth in the plant in an aimless fashion from one operation to another, and it does not travel half a mile between one department and another. If such were the case, the cost of manufacture would doubtless be doubled or trebled.

The salesman might well ask himself every day whether his work is properly routed, and if not, what it is costing him to manufacture his commodity, the sale. Has he routed his trips between towns so as to reduce to a minimum the time that must be lost on

trains and in waiting over for connections? Are his calls arranged so that he can travel in a straight line? Or must he zigzag back and forth thru town, now at one end and now at the other—chasing isolated prospects at each end? Has he selected prospects who are in the same neighborhood? Or is he wasting valuable presentation-making time and energy covering long distances after each interview?

Let us look first at his routing between towns. This is not of great importance unless, of course, the salesman is making towns at the rate of more than one a day. The route should be laid out as far as possible in a straight line. Peculiar train schedules, however, may prevent the advantageous arrangement of a straight route and it may be well to skip a town and double back. A new salesman will always find men who have been covering the route for some time and who know all the tricks that may be played with the time-table.

3. *Organizing a town.*—Let us look now at the planning of the work within a town. We shall assume that the salesman has never visited the town. His first duty will be to get as good a knowledge of the town as is possible in the time which he can spare. If his proposition is such that he will be in town for a week or more, it may pay him to spend a half-day, or in some cases a whole day, in merely looking about the town and gauging its possibilities.

The second step will be to make a card list of all possible prospects. Names can be secured from the

general directory or from the telephone directory, or from such other sources as the nature of the particular business may suggest. Quite possibly the salesman's house may have provided him with prospect cards, but no matter how thoroly he may be equipped in this way, it is probable that some names will have been left out, and the salesman should be careful to see that they are added to his list. If the salesman has visited the town previously, of course a good deal of this work will have been done, and if he carries a line that enables him to sell to the same customers over and over again, he probably will have a set of data cards that will give him full information.

The salesman will find much valuable information and, in the case of some lines, the names of possible prospects in the local papers. He should make it a point to read these papers if he intends to stay in the town any length of time or if he intends to revisit it at frequent intervals. One of the best specialty salesmen in the country makes it a point always to send for the town papers for the past week just as soon as he arrives at the hotel.

The rule of routing calls in a straight line cannot always be strictly followed, for there may be more important things to be taken into consideration. For example, it might be very important for a specialty salesman to see two or three of his most prominent prospects the very first thing, irrespective of their location in the town. Moreover, during his stay he will, of course, call upon prospects that have been recom-

mended to him by customers rather than those who are most accessible, but to whom he has no introduction. Another exception to the rule of routing calls in a straight line, is the case of the staple salesman who wishes to start off with the most progressive store and work down. In any case, of course, it is advisable to plan the day's work carefully.

4. *Planning the day's work.*—The work for the day is planned with the aid of a map of the town. The number of prospects that can be visited will depend on the number of presentations of the particular proposition that can be made in a day, and on the proportion of prospects who, for one reason or another, cannot be seen. It is better to plan too many calls than too few, for if the salesman plans an insufficient number he is likely not to have enough calls for a day's work. Many salesmen make it a point to spend some time on Sunday planning their work for the coming week. Then each evening they select from the week's prospects those that they intend to see the next day.

Immediately after the close of the day's field work, the salesman should sit down and prepare the day's orders for forwarding. Then, while events are still fresh in his mind, he should make out his daily report, at the same time carefully reviewing the day's work and noting the mistakes that he has made. It is of extreme importance that this period of retrospection come as soon as the salesman has made his last call, rather than later when his ardor has cooled and he has

forgotten some of the finer points of the day's happenings.

5. *Preparing for the next day.*—Immediately after the orders have been prepared and any mistakes of the day have been noted, the next day's work should be laid out. Naturally this cannot be done while a man is in the field. Moreover, if the planning is postponed the enjoyment of the evening's recreation is likely to be marred because the salesman cannot throw off the feeling that there is unfinished business on his mind. When he finally gets at it, at eleven o'clock or later, he is cold toward his proposition and his energy is at a low ebb. In other words, he has allowed his mind to slip out of the selling groove and he finds it hard to bring it back.

Possibly the loss would not be serious if he should actually sit down at eleven o'clock and do the planning, but usually he does not. He generally decides that it is too late that night to make out his report and that he will get up an hour earlier in the morning and do it. He does not do this, however, and consequently he starts a day that is likely to be unproductive. Breakfast is eaten hurriedly and with a nervous sense of something extra to do that morning—a condition that is sure to prevent proper digestion. Then the salesman hastily selects the names of three or four prospects and hurries out half-prepared.

6. *Percentage of efficiency.*—Mention has been made of the wasting of valuable time and energy that should go into presentations, in covering long dis-

tances between interviews. The salesman might well make it a practice during the period of retrospection following the day's work, to set down the number of hours spent in the field and divide it into the number of hours spent actually interviewing prospects. He would find the percentage of efficiency startlingly low, possibly not higher than thirty or forty per cent. That would mean that sixty or seventy per cent of the entire time spent in the field was spent in traveling from one prospect to another, or in waiting in outer offices. Careful planning and careful watching on the part of the salesman will do much to improve this percentage. One hundred per cent is, of course, impossible of attainment, but conscientious, energetic salesmen should be able to reach an efficiency of sixty to seventy-five per cent.

7. *Getting in a full day's work.*—The salesman cannot afford to spend his time cataloging the hours when it may be inconvenient for buyers to see him. If he happens to know the prospect's habits, it will, of course, be advantageous for him to call at the time that is convenient for the prospect. In other cases he must take his chance, and if he does not obtain an interview, he should lose no time in passing on to the next prospect. This phase of the subject is well discussed in a little message from a sales manager to his men on the road:

> There are four begging little devils that haunt our salesmen. Their food is prospect-seeing time.
>
> One hungry little devil is about o' mornings. He mounts

the shoulder of the Peerless One and whispers: "No use trying to see your first man before nine-thirty—got to give him time to open his mail." And if you so much as waver for an instant, he straightway devours the front-end of your precious morning.

The next little begging devil's idea of a dainty morsel is a toothsome mid-day. "It is now a quarter to twelve," he adroitly starts. "If you see a man now he is likely to go to lunch any minute and he'll hustle you thru to get rid of you and get out." If you agree to this proposition, he waits until he gets you comfortably seated at luncheon, or in a hotel lobby, and then suggests: "You can't see him before two o'clock now—they won't be back from lunch." And before your very eyes he gnaws two and one quarter perfectly good hours right out of the middle of your priceless day. And maybe, too, he nibbles off the half-hour between two and two-thirty, by way of dessert, before he leaves.

At the first suspicion of a shadow that crosses the afternoon light of these autumn days, a third little devil, lean and ravenous, accosts you. "It is getting dark," he mournfully chants, "you can't start a new talk now. It's getting dark. Your man won't be in a mood to listen." And before you know it, he has gobbled the entire end off your afternoon.

Before these three little begging devils are satisfied, your working hours are from twelve to one, with an hour for lunch, or rather, from twelve to two, with two hours for lunch!

The fourth little devil feeds only after long intervals, after the manner of a snake; and then, like a snake, he gorges himself. His food is Saturdays. "You can't do anything on Saturdays," he says. "It's a short day and they're too busy to listen." And so, without even allowing you to start out, he swallows your Saturday whole.

And the terrible part of it is that they're such plausible little devils.

If you don't watch out you'll find yourself accepting their say-so as the gospel truth. And they can find for you every single hour of the day a seemingly good reason why you should not work just then.

But they're liars—every one.

If you want to prove it, just sally forth some bright morning and find out how many men get down to their offices at eight or eight-thirty. Progressive business men cannot transact their business in a few fag ends of hours in a day, any more than you can. And if a man is at his office at eight or eight-thirty in the morning, it's the best indication in the world that he's a good prospect for you. He's a hustler. He's a "get there" man.

And he can be turned aside from his mail by something that interests him, as well as he can be turned aside from anything else—and furthermore, progressive business men are not cluttering themselves up these days with the opening of a routine mail.

Then just try going after a few prospects between twelve and two. You may find a man or two of them out, of course. But all you have to do in that event is to go on to the next fellow. If you find him in, it will prove a splendid time for a thoro and uninterrupted presentation. A man is always ready, between twelve and two, to relax and let up on his work if an excuse to do so is presented. And your proposition is a grand little excuse. Callers between twelve and two are few and far between, and your chances of not being interrupted are much better than at any other time of the day.

You can see them before two. If you found a man out between twelve and one o'clock you may be sure that you will find him in between one and two. And you'll be finding him after he's had a good comfortable meal and is in a mood to sit back, comfort himself with his after-dinner cigar and listen.

That dusk argument needs no disproving. A man who has been busy in his office all day—and the men to whom you will sell are all busy men—doesn't know whether it's dark or light outside. And the chances are that he has been using artificial light all day, anyhow. As for that "Saturday" devil, he hasn't a leg to stand on. Just you go out and try it.

The salesman should so plan his work that in the morning he can pick up his equipment and without any delay go to his first prospect. No detail work should be left over from the night before to sap his morning energy. He should get out early while his brain is fresh and his prospect is still in good trim from a night's rest. A salesman can always talk more intelligently right after a good night's sleep than he can later in the day, after he has become partly fagged. The man who sees his first prospect at eight-thirty very often has his sales for the day started at nine o'clock.

8. *Rainy day work.*—Generally speaking, there is no reason why a salesman should be idle on rainy days. A rainy day is a good day for business if the salesman himself feels right. On such a day the prospect sits at his desk not inclined to do a great deal, looks out at the rain and feels glad he does not have to be out in it. It is the kind of day when he does not feel busy and when he is in the mood to give a caller all the time that the latter wishes, and when there are not many callers to take his time. On a rainy day a retailer is a promising prospect, for it is unlikely that he will be much interrupted by customers. And in bad weather, specialty men can often arrange all their calls in one office-building and get their business dry-shod.

9. *Law of averages.*—The salesman should keep clearly in mind the fact that it is not always desirable to land an order no matter how long it takes. He must get orders quickly, for only in that way can he

do a satisfactory volume of business. A new salesman on a specialty proposition, speaking to the organization's star salesman one day, said: "I've been following your advice of finding out all about my man before going to see him, planning my talk so that it will fit him exactly, and not going to see him unless I feel absolutely fit. The method works fine. Why, I talked to only six people all last week and I landed two of them. That means that my interviews were thirty-three and one-third per cent successful." The star salesman said afterward that he sat back and wondered whether he was really responsible for that attitude. He certainly had not intended to advocate the use of any part of the time which the salesman could devote to seeing prospects, for any other purpose.

It is, of course, desirable that a large proportion of the interviews should produce sales, but the work of acquiring the necessary ability should be done by lamplight. It should always be remembered that the ability to close a great many sales is a good supplement to hard work, but not a substitute for it. The day should be devoted entirely to seeing prospects. If that is done, altho the number of sales in proportion to the number of interviews may be small, still the number of sales will be considerable, and the salesman's income will be large.

The law of averages as the salesman understands it, is, that out of a given number of people seen, a fairly definite proportion will ordinarily buy. The more

people seen, therefore, the larger the volume of business. Even if the proportion decreases, the actual results of seeing a large number of people will be larger. To close a sale in five cases out of fifty in a week gives the commission man two and one-half times as much as if he closed two out of six cases. Time—hours, minutes, seconds—is one of the salesman's greatest assets. The way for the salesman to make that asset pay cash dividends is to see every prospect he possibly can, every day in the week.

The salesman owes this kind of hard work not only to himself but also to his house. The idea that some salesmen have of being busy is shown by their trying to do on the last day of the week the things that they have neglected during the other five. A house is entitled to a certain volume of business from a territory each year. If that business is not secured this year, the salesman cannot make up for it next year, for the house would be entitled to the next year's business in any case. In the same way, the salesman has no right to waste time four days of the week and try to make it up the other two, for the house is entitled to his best efforts all six days.

10. *Salesman's attitude toward territory.*—Prospects are very much the same the world over, and consequently one territory is not so different in possibilities from another. The salesman should resist the temptation to think that his territory is an unusually difficult one to work, and that there are much better territories in other parts of the country. Most top-

notch salesmen agree that success in selling is nine-tenths a question of the salesman and one-tenth a question of the territory.

The salesman should realize that the territory is an asset of the house. He should work it intensively and systematically, and he should never admit defeat in any town. The towns that are most difficult to open up are often the best fields, for they have in many cases been given up in disgust by the weaker salesmen; consequently when better salesmen come they reap a big harvest. It is astonishing how many prospects in any town are "croakers"; they seem to take pleasure in telling salesmen that the place is dead and that other salesmen did no business there. A salesman can get plenty of that kind of advice in any town in the country, and of course if he heeded it he would do no business at all. He should bear in mind that his house has produced a desirable article, that it can be sold, and that it is his work to sell it. These "croakers" are not favorable prospects, it is true; but fortunately there are plenty of other people in the town—they say less and do more, and become prosperous. They are the likely prospects.

11. *Salesman's time and its use outside of business hours.*—The modern business world has pretty generally abandoned the idea that there is no connection between what a man does at eleven o'clock at night and what he does at eleven o'clock the next morning. The old-time hit-or-miss sales management concerned itself little with this problem. If the salesman turned

in a fair number of sales, his personal faults and excesses were condoned. That is not the attitude of the sales manager of today. He is not satisfied with only a part of the salesman's efficiency. He demands maximum results, and the salesman who wishes to remain in his employ must take the precaution to conserve every ounce of energy that he possesses. No man can be intemperate in anything and expect to develop himself to the utmost. The keen, aggressive, successful salesman of today is clear-eyed and clear-brained. He achieves the results that he sets out to accomplish because he is absolute master of himself—for mastery of self gives mastery of others.

The day of the salesman who was a heavy drinker passed long before we put prohibition into the constitution. The business goes today to the salesman who is most useful to his customer. A salesman's days of usefulness are numbered if befuddled mornings follow dissipated nights. The sales manager and the credit man unite to refuse business influenced by whiskey diplomacy.

While, on the one hand, the salesman must be temperate in his amusements and must be a hard worker, on the other hand no man can work one hundred per cent of the time and be more than fifty per cent efficient. If the salesman would make the best of his time, he must devote a part of it to healthful recreation. He must have diversion in order that he may return to business with a clearer brain. Recreation does much to keep the salesman cheerful and optimis-

tic. The things that a salesman does outside of business hours—the hobbies he rides, the books he reads—have much to do with what he is able to accomplish during business hours.

Recreation, then, should be a servant to the salesman; the salesman should not be a slave to his recreation. And above all, recreation should never be allowed to encroach upon prospect-seeing time, nor should it ever be allowed to interfere with the salesman's preparation for his next day's work. The true test of the value of the salesman's recreation is whether or not it enables him to return to his work more cheerful and more efficient.

REVIEW

What are the salesman's duties and responsibilities to his house? to his customers? to himself? in regard to territory?

Discuss the salesman's time and its use—in business hours; outside of business.

Discuss as they apply to your business: organizing a town; planning the day's work; preparing for the next day; percentage of efficiency; rainy day work.

CHAPTER X

COOPERATION, INFLUENCE AND FRIENDSHIP

1. *Meaning of cooperation.*—The word cooperation embodies one of the biggest ideas in salesmanship. We have already spoken of the value of cooperation in gaining an audience with the prospect. We shall look at it here in its broader aspects, for cooperation is the order of the day—the house cooperates with the salesman and with the customer, and looks for their cooperation in return. The customer extends his cooperation to the house, and more especially to the salesman. The salesman cooperates both with the house and with the customer.

Cooperation means working together with other men and having them work together with you, for mutual assistance and benefit. For no man of his own unaided efforts can accomplish much.

2. *Salesman's cooperation with the house.*—In a certain Indiana town, on a river-front street in a neighborhood frequented principally by river men and roustabouts, is a dingy windowed shop which is designated a custom-tailoring establishment, because it keeps in stock a few wisps of cloth, and because its proprietor devotes himself to the repairing and pressing of the commonest kind of clothing. There, in the

midst of sordid surroundings, is a neat, bright sign proclaiming this place to be the exclusive agency in that town for a nationally-advertised article of clothing. The salesman who placed that exclusive agency was not cooperating with his house. He was not doing his honest best to make his company's enormous investment in advertising pay dividends. His half-hearted efforts to place the exclusive agency with a worthy house probably failed, and, not wanting to admit the failure, he hit upon this poor, makeshift method of making things look all right at the home office.

An honest salesman who is loyal and has a right conception of the meaning of cooperation, will do nothing that is not to the best interests of his house. He feels that, in a sense, he is a partner of the house. He travels about the country with no direct supervision, performing acts for which his principals are responsible and upon which their profits depend. He feels that he owes the house the same sort of cooperation that one partner owes another.

3. *Securing valuable information.*—In times gone by, salesmen felt that their following—those to whom they sold—was their own chief asset. They jealously guarded the information that they possessed concerning their customers. When they left one house to make a new connection, they switched their trade to the new house with them. All this has changed, and today customers are considered as an asset of the house rather than of the salesman. For the most

part, the trade remains with the house even tho the salesmen in the territory are changed. The salesman no longer withholds information about the customers. He secures all he can and passes it along to his house.

A salesman's suggestion to his firm that a certain dealer's window display is poor will bring, in the firm's letter to that house acknowledging the order, a carefully worded suggestion as to the dollars and cents value of competent window-dressers, as well as an offer to send, upon request, definite information as to how and where to procure them. A report on the prospect's advertising will bring suggestions for improvement, illustrations of cuts, and upon the dealer's personal request, in many cases, the actual cuts will be sent.

4. *Cooperating with credit man and with advertising manager.*—A matter of much importance is cooperation with the credit man. While the latter makes use of the usual credit-information agencies, he must look to the salesman to supplement this if he is to handle credits with a minimum loss and a maximum amount of business. Ratings change more rapidly than credit books can be issued. Many of the smaller business men have a prejudice against disclosing their financial condition to Dun's or Bradstreet's. As a consequence, their ratings are lower than they should be. But financial standing is not the only index to reliability. A business of very limited capital but with large capacity to grow may be a better credit risk

and may be better worth developing than one with a large capital whose business is beginning to suffer from dry-rot. The credit man of today aims to know these things. He can secure a knowledge of them in just two ways; either he must obtain the knowledge at first hand, or he must depend on the cooperation of the salesman.

The salesman should welcome an opportunity to cooperate with his company, in the handling of slow-paying customers and in adjusting complaints. While it is in most cases bad practice to have a salesman do any part of the routine collection work, it is highly desirable that he deal with special cases. It is frequently the case that an account is disputed, because the customer may rightfully feel that he is entitled to an allowance on account of certain defects in the goods, delay in shipping, improper packing, or something of that sort. Unless such matters as these are adjusted satisfactorily, a customer will be lost to the house. The same thing holds true of all complaints. The salesman should realize that the best sales practice is to make the adjustment complete and satisfactory before trying to get further business from the disgruntled customer.

Probably one of the most difficult branches of the work in which to get the salesman's active cooperation is the advertising. A great many salesmen are prone to look askance at the virtues of advertising as applied to their particular products. This has been true in connection with almost every advertising campaign.

A great many firms have failed for no other reason than the absence of the cooperation of the salesman in turning inquiries into orders, in cashing in on the general publicity. This cooperation on the part of the salesman is looked upon as an important link in the chain in every advertising campaign. The salesman should feel under obligation to follow the instructions of his house regarding the advertising, he should follow advertising leads immediately and should report upon them promptly. He will be amply repaid for this cooperation in increased orders.

5. *Relation to sales manager.*—The salesman's work in the field is arduous. Most sales managers are careful, first, to refrain from requiring any information from their salesmen that can be secured from any other source, and secondly, to reduce the salesmen's clerical work to a minimum. There are, however, some reports which sales managers deem essential. Expense accounts must be fairly detailed, route slips must be made out, and formal information reports must sometimes accompany orders. If the salesman considers that any of this work does not properly belong to him, or that it is taking up too great a portion of his time, he should discuss the matter frankly with his sales manager. Many a good salesman has lost favor with those at the home office because he has been careless and neglected his reports. A salesman should consider himself a business man and organize and dispatch his work in the same or-

derly manner in which the home office performs its duties.

At times the house may desire to test the selling possibilities of a new article or to carry on some similar experiment. It may desire to push for an especially large sale of a particular commodity, or to reduce to a minimum the sale of an unprofitable one. Loyal cooperation demands that the salesman throw himself into these experiments or special campaigns with his whole heart and that he give the sales manager his best support in carrying them to a successful conclusion.

When a firm enters foreign markets, the salesman may be of material assistance in providing for the safe and prompt handling of shipments, in seeing goods thru the custom house, and in making advantageous arrangements for collections.

Most houses publish a house organ for the benefit of the men in their selling organizations. A great many house organs are notable chiefly for their dearth of salesmen's contributions. The salesman looks forward eagerly to the arrival of his house organ, bringing him news of what the other fellows are doing and how they are doing it. He receives from it a great deal of inspiration. He helps his house and his fellow salesmen when he contributes to it. The salesman should cooperate with the house-organ editor to make the paper a real clearing-house for information.

Closely connected with this obligation is his duty to

contribute for the benefit of the whole organization, any new selling point that he may have worked out and put into effect. Altho to do this may, on first thought, appear to be against his own best interests, especially if there is a prize contest of any sort in progress, no salesman will question that the best interests of the house and himself are, in the long run, identical.

Something was said in the last chapter about methods to be used in working a territory. The salesman is not cooperating with the house to the fullest extent unless he assumes the moral responsibility to get the best out of his territory at all times. It has been said that the salesman on the road keeps the plant going. He cannot do that unless he puts forth his best efforts for eight hours a day, six days a week. The house is entitled to the salesman's cooperation in keeping the office running at full capacity. He should make sure to send in all of the business to which the house is entitled from his territory.

6. *Cooperation from the house.*—The salesman has a perfect right to expect that all this cooperation he gives the house, every bit of information he furnishes regarding a customer or prospect, every report he turns in, will sooner or later be to his advantage. If the assistance he renders does not enable the house to cooperate with him in increasing business in his territory, his efforts are not accomplishing their purpose.

Unfortunately, many salesmen ask for and expect

a great deal of help and information which it is impossible for the house to give, or which would be far too costly for the results that could be achieved by giving it. Moreover, salesmen sometimes make promises to customers that cannot be carried out. The salesman should bear in mind that most of the cooperation that the house can afford to give, has been systematized. When asking for special cooperation not provided for in the system, he should carefully consider the cost of that assistance as compared with results that could be expected if it were given.

The cooperation given to the salesman by the house will be discussed more in detail in the second section of this Text. Briefly, it is of two kinds: Cooperation in organizing territories and in securing prospects and information concerning them; and the cultivation of customers, to the end that he may get further and increased business from them.

7. *Salesman's cooperation with customers.*—A leading drygoods salesman tells a story of having worked strenuously all week to finish his last town on Friday afternoon so that he might take a run home over the week-end. He arrived at the last place on schedule late Friday afternoon and went to make an appointment for that evening with the proprietor of the big drygoods store. He found his prospect in the midst of hurried preparation for Saturday business. His window-dresser had left him unexpectedly the day before. The salesman forgot all about the order for which he had come into town, and the pleas-

ant week-end he had planned; he took off his coat and dressed those store windows as they had never been dressed before. The window-dresser had acted also as clerk, so the salesman stayed over to plunge into the Saturday selling. He did not get away from the town until Saturday, on the night train. It is easy to believe that the store proprietor did not soon forget that service; it is not improbable that he held his orders until the arrival of the friend who had dressed his windows; indeed, it is quite likely that he turned the business of other merchants toward the man who helped him at the sacrifice of his own pleasure. That is probably the exact result the salesman expected, but his help was no less sincere because he expected this result.

A salesman expects to get cooperation from his customers and, in turn, stands ready to give all possible cooperation to them. It is significant in this connection, that the Heinze Company some time ago issued instructions to every salesman not to attempt to sell anything on Saturdays, but to jump in behind the counter with one of the retail grocers in the town in which he happened to be and help him sell his goods.

8. *Serving as a clearing house for information.*— The traveling salesman covers a wide range of territory and accumulates a great deal of information regarding the best business methods of the firms on which he is calling. He acts as a clearing-house for these ideas. He knows much about window-trimming and effective display; he can tactfully correct the ten-

dency of the storekeeper in the small town to overcrowd his windows. He can arrange a tempting array of things to catch the eye of anyone who enters the store. And who can blame him if, in doing so, he gives his own line a prominent place? He knows the new styles. He is familiar with the lines that are moving most rapidly or with those that the bigger buyers are securing in large quantities. If the dealer is overstocked, or has a line of goods that is slow in getting off the shelves, the salesman can give him suggestions for plans of special sales that will help him move them.

The salesman can help his customer with advertising problems; he can suggest more effective copy and new, distinctive methods of arranging the advertising matter. He can be of assistance in the preparation of lists for circular letters. In some cases, he can even go so far as to suggest and discuss better methods of financing the customer's business.

The salesman knows that a great many sales over the counter are lost because of the inefficiency of the retail clerk. He should be able to devise and suggest methods of training clerks that will enable them to sell to a greater proportion of the people who enter the store and to sell a larger amount to each of them. In doing this it is probable that he will gain the friendship of the clerks and that, as a result, his line will be among those that move quickly.

All this is just as true in principle for the specialty man, for he, too, meets business men who have difficult

business problems and he can help in their solution. The range of the possible cooperation that the retail clerk can render is more limited. Even here, however, there are opportunities for genuine service.

9. *Cultivating personal relations.*—The opportunity for giving a personal touch to transactions with customers should not be overlooked. One salesman, who handles an article on which he can get no future orders—that he can sell to a person only once in a lifetime—has a list of every man he has ever sold. At appropriate times during the year he sends every one of them a card of remembrance or some little token that, as he expresses it, keeps the memory green. He takes the trouble to address each card himself and to write the message in his own handwriting so that there will be no mistake about its being a personal greeting. As a result, tho he may not have seen a man for two or three years, he is considered an old friend and given valuable cooperation in securing new business. The picture post-card from Atlantic City, which carries the message, "Wish you were along," is much appreciated by the salesman's customer out in Ohio. Sending something in which the salesman knows the customer will be interested is a sincere personal touch. It goes without saying that the prospects who do not buy should not be slighted as regards these little attentions. The salesman who increases the number of his friends increases the number and the value of his assets.

10. *Cooperation from customers.*—A wag once

said that success was largely a matter of dining with the right people. Certainly having the friendship and cooperation of the right people constitutes the line of least resistance to success in selling. A high-class specialty salesman, who handled a service for business men and government officials, planned a trip to the Philippine Islands, intending to stop off at Hawaii. He did not start from New York. He decided that the place from which to start that trip was Washington. From a high official in his concern he secured a letter of introduction to a prominent man in Congress. To this man the salesman explained his mission, and from him he secured further introductions. He left Washington a week later, armed with a letter from the Secretary of State to all the Far Eastern bureau chiefs, and with letters from those in charge of insular affairs at Washington to the chief executives in Hawaii and Manila.

At both these places, then, he was enabled immediately to get on a right footing with those high up in government circles, and from them he obtained letters of indorsement that enabled him to reach the lesser government officials effectively. Then it was not difficult to use the cooperation of his government friends in reaching the business men of the community. Incidentally, in his travels he secured letters to Americans living at ports in China and Japan where he planned to stop. His whole successful trip, in short, was just one big plan of progressive cooperation.

In this particular case the salesman, in return for the wonderful cooperation that he received, gave nothing but the warm, sincere friendship of a man of remarkable personality. Those who used their influence to further his interests felt that they had been doing their friends a favor by directing the salesman to them. This is the best kind of cooperation as the specialty salesman sees it.

11. *Value of customer cooperation.*—A large concern which sold filing equipment allotted so much territory to each representative that the salesman was able to see only the principal prospects in each town. Judging from the occasional inquiries from smaller concerns, the company decided that these firms might be worth working. With that end in view they reapportioned the territory and gave each salesman only as much of the field as he could work intensively. The results were gratifying beyond the company's expectation. The smaller concerns were strongly influenced by the fact that the salesman could name large companies in town who were using the equipment. Furthermore, office men in large concerns talked to those in smaller ones about the equipment and were very glad to recommend it when the occasion required. The influence and cooperation thus secured made selling to the smaller concerns an easy matter. This principle holds true in all kinds of selling.

The fact that certain big drygoods concerns have stocked up on a certain line will influence the smaller

dealers to do the same. The fact that a president buys a certain article will influence the vice-president to buy it; the department heads will be influenced by the president and the vice-president. The names of the prominent people of a town on a list of purchasers, have a dollars-and-cents value. The general principle is to start at the top and work down; that is, to secure first the business of the individual or the concern that will influence further business.

12. *Customer as a firm representative.*—A salesman who was being complimented on his wonderful record in selling a new office device, replied that his record would be remarkable if he were the only representative his firm had in town. He was only the chief representative, it seemed. Every customer, he explained, was an assistant representative, operating under his direction and working up leads, cooperation and enthusiasm. Considering that he had one hundred and fifty representatives, he concluded it was not so surprising that he was getting big results.

This man seldom asked directly for cooperation. He would merely drop in as he was passing to thank a customer for having directed him to a man who had purchased the day before; or he would stop with a magazine article in which he thought the customer might be interested; he would bring in a little book for which he had sent to New York because he knew the customer would enjoy it. Then as he was leaving, his host would probably make some such remark as this: "I was talking to Brown yesterday about your

office device and he seems quite interested. I should suggest that you go and see him. Mention my name." Here again we find the "you" attitude of the salesman effective. A great many specialty salesmen make the mistake of breaking in upon a customer merely to ask whether he can suggest anyone who would be likely to buy.

Under some circumstances as, for instance, when the new prospect whose name is suggested is difficult to see, it might be well for the salesman to reply: "All right, I shall be glad to see him. I wonder whether you would mind getting him on the phone and telling him I am coming?" Or, if it seems preferable: "I wonder whether you would mind giving me a few words of introduction to him on the back of your card." Cooperation is valuable; it wins for the salesman interviews which are based on friendliness; and in the case of this kind of interviews the proportion of sales is large.

Staple salesmen very often overlook opportunities for cooperation. Retail salesmen do not get as much of it as they should. There are a large number of salesmen in the men's clothing, women's cloaks and suits, furniture and rug departments of the big retail stores, however, who have a following of customers who frequently send friends to them.

13. *Letters of indorsement.*—The use of letters of indorsement as a part of a salesman's equipment is becoming more and more common. Those received from especially influential men or particularly impor-

tant concerns are valuable sales material in any part of the country. The same thing is true, in a slightly less degree, of letters from people who are little known. Much more valuable than either of these are the local letters of indorsement that the salesman secures thru the cooperation of his more prominent customers.

It is an art to secure from a customer the exact sort of letter of indorsement desired. In a few cases, the customer will allow the salesman to dictate the letter, and then, of course, the matter is simple. In a much larger number of cases, however, the customer will desire to say what he pleases and to say it in his own way. The danger here is that the letter may be too long, too general or possibly couched in such extravagant terms as to seem an exaggeration.

The salesman, then, must draw the customer out on particular points, and, when he has secured two or three specific statements in good forceful language, he can suggest: "Mr. Customer, you have made three strong points for my proposition and you have made them in very forceful language. I wonder whether you would mind giving me a letter making just those three points. I know you would be willing to indorse the whole proposition if I asked you to, but I am going to be satisfied if you will just give me three or four paragraphs making those three points." The salesman will, of course, know what kind of indorsement letter he desires, and he must secure it by means of strong, positive suggestion.

14. *Loyalty and cooperation.*—The salesman, then,

should be loyal to the house and loyal to the customer. He should cooperate with the house and with the customer. Loyalty inspires loyalty and cooperation inspires cooperation. The salesman who satisfies the customer, who gets business in the right way, and who brings his customer helpful, practical suggestions is giving him cooperation in the best sense of the word. Friendship and the cooperation that it creates govern almost every act of humanity. Unless the salesman can create influence, friendship and cooperation, for himself and for his house, he will meet with untold difficulty and discouragement. But the man who can foster these will find both pleasure and profit in practising the art of salesmanship.

REVIEW

How should the salesman cooperate with the house? With the customer? With the sales manager especially?

Discuss the cooperation the salesman may look for from the house; from the customer.

PART II

SALES MANAGEMENT

SALES MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER I

THE SALES MANAGER—HIS QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES

1. *Necessity for efficient sales management.*—Sales management is distinctly a present-day problem. Not so many years ago the principal business houses of the country were distributors of staples; they sold goods for which there was a demand already existing. The area in which they could sell was, to a great extent, limited by the lack of shipping facilities. They felt that they were entitled to a fair share of the business within this territory. The salesman was looked upon as a man who merely called upon dealers, a hail fellow well met, who by story-telling and general good fellowship, secured the orders that the dealer had to place. The distributors failed to realize that the methods of handling the salesmen from headquarters had much to do with the volume of business turned in by the selling force.

Consequently, the sales department was looked upon as a sort of necessary evil, and the salesman was too often considered a more or less irresponsible per-

son, who was unfitted for any of the really important departments of business, and who had capitalized a roaming disposition and a pleasing personality. The supervision of the salesman was often left either to the proprietor's promising young son—whose activities in this direction consisted principally of writing letters of carping criticism— or to the trusted bookkeeper, who considered sales management a kind of side issue and confined his supervision almost entirely to criticism of the expense accounts.

It remained for the sellers of specialties to show what could be done by an efficient and properly managed sales organization. In specialty lines enthusiastic and properly trained selling forces, under the direction of men with a proper conception of the meaning and the importance of sales management, have out of nothing created markets for their products; have succeeded in fields where it was necessary to educate the consumer and create the demand before a sale could be made; have changed the antagonism of prospects into active cooperation; and have evinced a loyalty for their houses previously unknown in staple lines.

Andrew Carnegie is reported as having once said that if his business were taken from him, but his organization were left to him, it would be a comparatively simple matter to build up a new business; but that if his organization were taken from him it would be a much more serious matter, since without his organization the business would inevitably fail and the building of a new organization, except by a gradual

process extending over a long period, would be an impossibility. There is no other phase of business in which organization is as important as in selling; and an efficient organization cannot be achieved without the expenditure of time and labor. To build a loyal and efficient selling force, and to create in it a proper spirit, is the work of months and even years.

The old order of management, only slightly modified, still obtains in a great many staple houses. The small minority of such houses as have applied specialty methods to their sales management, however, have been remarkably successful. Their success has given a stimulus to the idea that, as production is generally unrestricted, the growth of a business is dependent on how much it can sell, and that the volume of the sales depends upon the organization, training and management of the selling force. Managers are coming to realize more and more that the methods of managing the men in the field determine, to a great extent, the volume of business they turn in, the measure of their loyalty and enthusiasm, and the length of time the best of them will remain with the organization. And the policy of the management will have everything to do, too, with the extent to which new men of the right caliber will be attracted to the organization. The first principle in the organization and maintenance of a successful selling force requires that selling be recognized as the most important part of the business.

2. *Object of modern sales management.*—The first effect of the awakening to the possibilities of the

new methods of sales management was the adoption of so-called "ginger up" methods. The sales manager was either a "good fellow," brought in off the road, who could "get the boys coming"; or a writer of "ginger" letters and "punchy" literature who was secured from outside the organization. For immediate results, these methods were probably as good as any; but to secure lasting results, enthusiasm, loyalty and the ability to make large sales, there must be a more solid foundation. Enthusiastic letters and a house organ that will make the organization a unit have their places, but they do not constitute the whole of sales management. The sales manager who would achieve permanent success today must have other abilities. His efforts must be directed to get not the most, but the best out of his men.

3. *Qualifications of the sales manager—rank and experience.*—It is desirable, tho not essential, that the sales manager be an important officer of the firm, preferably one with the title and authority of an executive officer. The fact that the sales manager is a high official of the firm insures close personal supervision of the sales department and, in addition, places the department on a high plane of dignity. With such a man in charge all the members of the sales department will take special pride in their work and in their organization, and better men will be attracted to that department than if the sales manager were merely a salaried man. This does not mean that the latter cannot be successful; it does mean, however, that he

will have to work at a disadvantage, unless he has been a member of the selling organization and the members like him and respect his ability.

It is better that the sales manager should have had selling experience, preferably with the organization of which he becomes the head. In the selling of important products of high value the salesmen should be men of brains and capacity. In such cases it is essential that the sales manager shall have had actual selling experience. In the selling of less important, lower-priced products, however, many sales managers who lacked selling experience have achieved success.

4. *Love of his men.*—We have already said that the only way to be able to handle men is to love them. This is just as true of the sales manager in dealing with his men as it is of the salesman in selling the goods. The love must be genuine; it must not be counterfeited. The sales manager should be a keen student of human nature. He should know the shortcomings of his men as well as their strong points. He should strive, without sarcasm, criticism or impatience, to eradicate the one and substantially recognize the other. The successful sales manager will have the confidence of his men not only in regard to matters of business, but regarding their personal and home relations also. He will visit the salesmen in their homes and will come to know their families almost as well as he does the men themselves.

It is here that his selling experience will prove helpful. The man who has experienced the hard work

and discouragement incidental to selling, understands the trouble of his men as no man can who knows these things only by hearsay. He will have a keen sympathy for the man in a "slump." It is not even necessary that he shall have been uniformly successful in the field. One of the principal reasons why the best salesmen do not oftentimes make the best sales managers is that their uniform success makes them impatient and critical of the salesman who is meeting setbacks and who, therefore, most needs the help of the sales manager.

A sales manager must not be autocratic. He will do well to remember that while he is leading his organization, he is also a part of it; for only when he is alive to this fact can he secure the team work essential to success. If he expects the men to be of the greatest possible help to him, he will not be satisfied merely to see that they are properly compensated, no matter how liberal he may be in this particular. He should be friendly with his men and should study them with the idea of bringing out their individual abilities and inspiring them to their best efforts.

5. *Loyalty to his men.*—The good sales manager acts as a buffer between the salesmen and any officers of the firm who may be calculating and critical. Such a statement is not a criticism of the executives. It merely means that the sales manager, being closer to his men, and realizing more keenly the difficulties of their work, can make these things clear to the other executives in such a way as to soften their feelings to-

ward the salesman who has perhaps sent in a harsh criticism of the production department, who has protested against shipping or collection methods, or whose sales have fallen off sharply in volume. A great many sales managers talk about loyalty from the men, and all of them expect it, but they should not forget that the men in the field look for loyalty from the sales manager. The sales manager who is loyal to his men will have loyal men about him.

6. *Ability to maintain discipline.*—While the sales manager must rule thru love and not thru fear, he must be able to maintain discipline in his organization. Otherwise, he will have men routing themselves thru their territories in a haphazard manner, making any arrangements they please with their customers, going outside the bounds of their territories for business, and running into the house for trivial reasons when they should be out selling. The sales manager's position, however, is no place for the over-strict disciplinarian. Good salesmen do not need many instructions. They resent being hedged about with many restrictions. They question the wisdom of the sales manager's directing their work too minutely. The sales manager should as far as possible throw the men on their own resources and hold them responsible for results. Rules should be few, and not too stringent. Such a method, if it includes broad-gauged supervision, gives a freedom of action that encourages self-reliance, develops strong men and weeds out weak ones. The

successful sales manager never has to drive his men; they stand ready to fight for him to the last ditch.

7. *Organizing ability.*—The sales manager must have a "teacher's mind." He must not only be able carefully to select men who can successfully sell his proposition, but he must labor continually with the organization and with each individual salesman, giving detailed instructions and showing how sales can be made. This is a difficult and tedious task, requiring no small amount of tact and infinite patience.

Furthermore, the sales manager must be a man who not only overflows with ideas himself, but who also has the talent to use the ideas of others. His desk should be a clearing-house for selling ideas and arguments. His knowledge of the goods sold should be superior to that of any other man in the organization.

The sales manager must not only be able to develop men for the selling work, but he must have a thoro grasp of the details of his department and must be able to develop capable assistants in his own office. He should encourage those under him to exercise intelligent initiative, in order that they may take the detail work off his shoulders, so that he himself can attend to the large problems of his department.

8. *Broad-gauged knowledge of business.*—If the sales manager is the right kind, his influence on the product of the house will be great, for he is in a position to avail himself of the suggestions sent in by the salesmen, and thus to judge what will sell. He should be able to discuss advertising with the adver-

tising man and, if necessary, to direct the advertising himself. He should be able to discuss finances with the financial man, and should be able to give a close estimate of the amount of business that can be counted on for a given period. This estimate will be based on his knowledge of the selling force, man by man, considering their past performances as well as their present accomplishment, and on his knowledge of the general business conditions existing in the various territories where his men are operating. This implies that he should have a sufficiently broad knowledge of economics, money and banking, and trade conditions to read the financial signs of the times. In addition, he should have a sufficient knowledge of the fundamental principles of accounting to enable him intelligently to discuss financial statements with the auditor.

9. *True test of efficiency.*—Finally—and this is extremely important—the sales manager should realize that his one excuse for being a sales manager is to get business. In order to do so he must keep his men in the right frame of mind so that they will give the house the best that is in them. It is all too easy for the manager in his office to lose sight of the difficulties of the men on the road. It is easy to get out of patience and to become critical. When it becomes necessary to admonish a salesman, it is easy to dictate a sarcastic or "clever" letter. Every communication that goes out to a salesman, and every conference that the sales manager has with any of his men, should be gauged by the question: "Will this

put the salesman in a frame of mind to get business?" If the answer is not an emphatic "yes" the manager should adopt different tactics.

10. *Necessity of inter-departmental cooperation.*— To sell goods at a profit is the ultimate purpose of every organization, whether its primary purpose is the production of such goods, or whether it is concerned with the distribution of articles that are produced by others. Accordingly, the efficiency of the sales department is a matter of great importance to every other department. This efficiency cannot reach its highest development unless every other department cooperates with the selling organization to bring about an administration of the selling activities that will be the most economical and efficient possible.

Selling itself, does not create value; it does not produce the kind of article that customers want; it does not insure prompt delivery, harmonious credit relations, or the right kind of service for the customers. All these things must be secured thru the cooperation of the other departments of the business, and it is just as much a part of the sales manager's work to secure this cooperation as it is to manage his men.

11. *Advertising department.*—The department most closely associated with the sales department is the advertising department. In some cases the advertising manager is subordinate to the sales manager, and the advertising is handled in the sales department. On the other hand, in rare instances, the sales manager receives his orders from the advertising manager.

The most common form of organization, however, is that in which the sales and advertising are handled by two separate departments which are directed by heads of equal rank. It is in the latter case, particularly, that cooperation and harmony are necessary.

Advertising and salesmanship not only are the chief factors in distribution but they are, as departments, intimately related. Advertising is generally used to pave the way for the salesman, to facilitate his efforts and to supplement his work. Therefore, the advertising plan should not be allowed to run counter to the selling plan. It goes without saying that cooperation cannot be one-sided. The advertising manager will often have a good idea of conditions in the field and not infrequently can make suggestions in regard to bettering them. The sales department should extend to the advertising department the same cooperation which it expects from the advertising department. The advertising plans, once launched, should have the ardent and sincere support of the selling organization, both in the office and in the field. The two departments, in other words, should strive for team work that shall be to the best interest of the house.

12. *Production department.*—There are few times during the year when the orders produced by the sales department and the goods produced by the manufacturing department are exactly equal. Sometimes the sales department allows the product to pile up during slack seasons, and this causes the production men to become impatient when the sales department

demands increased output in rush times. The sales manager should endeavor to eliminate this attitude. All matters affecting output should be considered from the standpoint of selling, as well as from that of production, and the sales manager should see that the production men acquire the selling point of view.

Standardization is one of the best means of reducing production costs. Carried too far, however, it is likely to reduce sales also. The sales manager should curb any tendency toward over-standardization. He should know enough about production, however, to realize the benefits of standardization and to be willing to work in harmony with the production manager to keep down the costs.

It is not an uncommon tendency for a concern that has built up its reputation and sales by putting out a superior product, gradually to reduce the quality of the goods. The sales manager realizes, probably better than anyone else, that if the house is to continue to secure an increasing volume of business, it must hold up the quality of its goods, and he realizes that any other tendency should be combated.

It may seem a far cry from the volume of sales to the labor policy of the firm. The sales manager, however, will realize that the labor policy has much to do with the quality of the goods produced. If the policy of the house toward its employes is a liberal one, they will show a spirit of personal interest, care and loyalty, and a desire to turn out the best product possible. But a house with a dissatisfied or frequently changing

organization will find it difficult to keep up the quality of its product.

13. *Credit department.*—While a settled policy in regard to payments and methods of handling credits and collections is desirable, it is also true that if there is too rigid an enforcement of credit rules, the sales department will be seriously handicapped, and a great deal of its work will be nullified. It is very often the best kind of business to build up custom by extending a line of credit to a man of small capital but large ability. It is frequently expedient to help out a slow-paying but apparently reliable customer with more goods. It is sometimes important from the sales manager's point of view that collection methods be relaxed in order that customers may not be lost in the process of getting in the money. The final decision of these matters must be left to the credit man, but the latter should bear in mind the fact that his policy will have much to do with both the present and the future volume of sales. His department can render valuable aid in the increasing of this volume.

Here, again, the cooperation of the two departments should be hearty and complete. The credit manager must often rely upon the men in the field for information concerning the moral risk on purchasers who possess little capital. While the sales manager should jealously guard against his men's time being taken up to too great an extent by work for other departments, it is only right that he should have the salesmen handle all cases of payment overdue where

the reason given for non-payment is that the goods or service was unsatisfactory.

14. *Handling of complaints.*—Those who handle complaints must have the selling point of view if the complaints are to be treated with the necessary care and breadth of vision. There is constant danger that trouble already existing between the house and the customer may be made worse. The improper handling of complaints may totally destroy the good business relations between the house and the customer. The sales manager should see that the house adopts a rational and liberal policy toward complaints. He should impress upon the official who handles these cases the fact that it is often better to acknowledge that the customer is right than to endeavor to prove that he is wrong. A right attitude in this matter is a powerful influence in building up trade.

15. *Service department.*—Sometimes the salesmen are given more than goods to sell. They may sell goods plus the service of the house to the customer. The performance of this service is usually in the hands of a separate department, tho salesmen take orders for the service of the house as well as for the goods it sells. The service may in some instances take the form of repairs, replacements and prompt supply of extra parts, or it may take the form of counsel to the customer, as to how best to use the goods, according to the nature of the business. In many lines the service department opens its relations with the customer by acknowledging the order. Serv-

ice is in many cases one of the salesman's strongest talking points. The person who intends to buy an automobile, for example, will always look into the service behind the car. Most makers of office appliances lay particular stress on the nature of the service that goes with their machines.

It is imperative that the members of the service department possess the selling point of view. A service that falls short of the customer's expectations is much worse than no service at all. The sales manager should see to it that a spirit of real helpfulness and sincerity pervades the service department. The service may be of such a nature that, while it adds materially to the comfort, pleasure, convenience, profit or safety of the customer, it nevertheless costs the house comparatively little money or effort. Those in charge of the service should be made to see that it is the little things that create a feeling of friendliness in the customer and make him a booster for the house. This is an age of service, and any efficient house possessing a spirit of real helpfulness to its customers may feel well assured of increased sales.

16. *Finances.*—A great many houses sell their goods on a basis of deferred periodical payments, and almost all extend more or less liberal credit to their customers. In all except a strictly cash business, it is imperative that the financial management look ahead and provide for the financing of every order produced by the sales department. Raw materials must be paid for in most cases before the finished product is sold,

and in trading companies the product sold must be paid for before payments from its customers are due. Where the volume of business produced by the sales department is fairly constant, and collections are ordinarily good, these expenditures will be taken care of by collections. If there is a rapidly increasing volume of sales, on the other hand, an ever-increasing working capital must be provided, if orders are to be filled promptly and the business is to be kept in a sound condition. This means that there must be close harmony and cooperation and a thoro understanding between the sales and the financial managers.

17. *How cooperation is secured.*—The development of this cooperation between the sales organization and the other departments of a business cannot be left to chance. Unless an organization is composed of exceptional individuals, it seems natural for many of the employes to work at cross purposes. It is natural that each department should be concerned chiefly with its own interests. Its members are prone to magnify the importance of their department and to underestimate the importance of the others. Interdepartmental jealousy and the lack of cooperation are unfortunately characteristic of many establishments, even when their organizations are highly developed and they have attained a large measure of success.

The problem, then, is largely one of human nature, and whenever this is true the solution cannot be found by a resort to any merely mechanical methods. The function of system in business is to secure the greatest

results with the least expenditure of time and energy. But no system, no matter how well planned or how carefully installed, can be effective unless all who are concerned in its operation cooperate to the full extent of their ability. Human nature must always be considered, and mere mechanical system will never take the place of tact in the equipment of the successful sales manager. There are too many sales managers who, tho tactful in handling their men and in dealing with executives, often throw diplomacy to the winds in dealing with other department heads and inside employes. Such men, also, often allow a harmful spirit of antagonism toward other departments to exist in those under them. Whatever other methods may be employed to secure departmental cooperation, they must always be made effective by the exercise of tact on the part of the sales manager.

In addition to establishing systems that will keep him closely in touch with the progress of orders thru the office and with any delays, complaints, or disagreements that may occur, the sales manager should make it a point to secure the loyalty of the other department heads and of the general body of office employes, to such a degree that they, as well as the men in the field, will accord him their hearty cooperation.

The sales manager who does not succeed in securing such cooperation from the various departments will be fighting against heavy odds and will get but a fraction of the business to which the ability of his selling force entitles him. While salesmanship counts for

much, and an efficient selling organization is essential to the success of any concern, good salesmanship must be reenforced by prompt shipments, high quality and a satisfactory service to the customer.

REVIEW

Discuss sales management as a present-day problem and show how it compares with the sales management of former days.

What part have sellers of specialties played in the development of the principles of sales management?

Enumerate and discuss the qualifications of the sales manager.

To what extent in your personal opinion should the sales manager dominate production; credits; shipping; advertising; service?

CHAPTER II

BUILDING AN ORGANIZATION—SELECTING MEN

1. *Planning the selling campaign.*—Before any steps can be taken toward the building of a selling organization, the plan of the selling campaign must be mapped out and the trade channels selected in accordance with the principles laid down in the Modern Business Text on "Marketing and Merchandising." Not until this has been done, can the best type of salesman be determined. To call upon dealers in small towns, and to take orders for case lots, will require quite a different type of salesman than is required to sell the same goods in carload lots to jobbers. The man fitted to place exclusive agencies for a specialty might be of little use in a campaign in which salesmen would have to go directly to the consumer with the same specialty. A man who is at home in the mining camps of the West would be out of place in a mining company's executive offices in the East, altho his mission in either case might be to secure a contract for blasting-powder.

This distinction is twofold. That a man can sell carload lots to jobbers does not indicate that he would be successful in selling case lots to dealers. The successful specialty salesman might be a failure at placing

exclusive agencies. The chances are that the salesman who was liked in the mining company's executive offices would not arouse a spark of interest on the part of the mine superintendent. The general principle to be observed is that the salesman should be fitted for his territory and should feel at home with the class of prospects upon whom he calls. He should be at least of the same caliber as his prospects, and should know something of their characteristics and habits, and should enjoy calling upon them.

2. *Testing out selling methods.*—In the case of a new proposition, the most important thing in developing the sales organization is to secure a few men who can test out the details of the selling plan previously determined upon, make such changes in it as may be necessary, suggest proper equipment, work out an effective selling talk and devise the details of personal selling methods; and who can, above all, set a pace and show what can be done in the way of sales.

In staple lines, too, field methods must be worked out if the new proposition is to compete successfully with older lines. For example, a hardware concern that sold a new and ingenious knife-sharpener, met with but little success by merely turning the proposition over to their regular salesmen. Finally, one of the best men was put on the proposition to make a study of it and work out successful selling methods. He found that in the few cases where sales had been made the knife-sharpener had not moved from the dealers' counters. He worked out a method of tak-

ing the knives of the dealer and his clerks and sharpening them with a few deft moves. When he had aroused their interest, he encouraged each of them to try the sharpener on his knife. He then secured a promise from the dealer and his clerks to make at least twenty-four demonstrations to each dozen of the sharpeners.

The salesman's second visit to the dealers a week later revealed the fact that the sharpeners moved rapidly under the new method and that the dealers, as a consequence, were ready to reorder. This method was passed on to the other salesmen of the concern, and enabled every one of them to make large sales of the sharpener. A great many sales opportunities are missed because special selling methods of this sort are not worked out.

3. *Pacemaker and new men.*—A salesman of the type described can be very helpful in studying the product, helping devise sales literature and preparing the material with which to train other men. His experimenting is so important that the sales manager who is developing methods for the selling of a new commodity can well afford to spend some time with him in the field. In that way only will the sales manager be able to strengthen the weak points in his prospective campaign. It is better and more conservative to give this salesman time to get into the producing class before trying to put on other men.

The first new men engaged should be of the same mature and able type as the pacemaker. In some

cases this testing out of the best selling method may extend over a long period of time. As the article becomes established, the selling methods, as well as the methods of training new men, will become more or less fixed. When this point is reached, the type of men required to sell the proposition gradually changes. They need not be so mature, nor need they ordinarily be so well compensated at the start, as were the salesmen first employed. Men with no previous selling experience can be trained. Eventually, the type of men desired is definitely determined and the methods of their selection also become more or less well defined.

4. *Securing salesmen thru advertisements.*—Advertising is the first method that one thinks of for getting into touch with recruits for the sales force. By this means it is possible to get some very good material. Sales managers are divided, however, as to whether it pays to use the classified columns of the newspapers. Altho some hold that applicants thru this source are usually unfitted for the work, very good results have been obtained from high-class papers. Trade papers are often used because they are in touch with applicants who are trained in the particular lines for which salesmen are desired. An especially wide-awake and ambitious class of men are secured from classified advertisements in such mediums as *Printers' Ink* and *System.* The fact that a man reads such mediums proves that he is good material.

The Buck Stove and Range Company some time

ago ran the following advertisement in newspapers in various parts of the country:

> Attorneys wanted as traveling salesmen. If not satisfied with your profession, why not enter the commercial field? We desire the services of several educated men of good appearance and address. A splendid opportunity for energetic, ambitious men.

The company explained this advertisement by saying that a great many bright young attorneys found it difficult to get along in their profession and that if the company were given men with trained thinking powers, it could make high-grade salesmen of them.

5. *Securing salesmen from the inside organization.*—The selecting of sales material from within an organization insures that the recruit will know a great deal about the product he is to sell. For this reason it is a good plan, where the commodities are intricate or technical, to choose salesmen from within the concern. One large mechanical specialty house follows this method almost entirely. The sales manager picks the likely men from various parts of the organization, calls them into his office, tells them that they are being trained for the selling organization and then puts them to work in the shop for a course of training.

Sales Manager Taylor of the American Steel and Wire Company makes the statement:

> We hire our office boys with a view to their becoming salesmen and then develop them in the office. In picking the boys, we get those of big stature, coming from good families and having a grammar school education. By promoting

our men from office boys to salesmen, step after step, we find that they stay with us and feel that the experience they have in our office is a reason for making their future with us.

The Sherwin-Williams Company of Cleveland also recruits its selling force largely from the inside ranks. The sales manager of the Winton Motor Car Company of Cleveland states that many of his best salesmen were developed from chauffeurs and mechanics who understood both human nature and the car they were selling.

6. *Obtaining salesmen from competing organizations.*—Unless the salesman from a competing organization comes to the sales manager on his own initiative, it is rather unsatisfactory to recruit the sales force from rival organizations. The ethics of the practice may well be questioned, and the salesman who has shown disloyalty to one house by going over to a competitor may show disloyalty to another. These objections do not always hold, however, and the advantage of the method is that the probable value of a man thus secured may be gauged with considerable accuracy.

7. *Obtaining salesmen from non-competing organizations.*—A good recruiting source is the non-competing selling organization which for some reason or other is not doing sufficient business to hold its good men. For example, when the stock exchanges were closed at the opening of the great European war, and the bottom fell out of the bond market the Addresso-

graph Company of Chicago approached men who had been selling bonds on commission, and thus secured a number of good salesmen. Being accustomed to meet men of prominence, the former bond salesmen took readily to selling addressographs to large concerns.

One of the most successful sales managers in the automobile business recruited his sales force in the early stages of the industry by sending inquiries in regard to specialties, such as safes, typewriters or adding machines, and having the salesmen call upon him. If, in the course of the presentation, he recognized the ear-marks of a real salesman, he would offer the man a connection.

Mr. J. K. Fraser, who had a good deal to do with the early success of Sapolio, used to make it a point to ask friendly customers about the men who called upon them from houses in other lines, and quite often he picked salesmen in this way.

8. *Obtaining salesmen thru missionary work of the sales force.*—If the members of an organization are proud of their connections and loyal to them, they will continually be on the lookout for recruits among the men whom they meet on the road selling other articles, among the clerks or other office men whom they meet in the course of their work, and among their friends. In many lines experience has indicated that this is the best method of securing new members for the selling force. To quote Mr. J. K. Fraser:

I think it is safe to say that in most cases the best men are recruited thru the missionary work of the selling organization. The best men we get come from the recommendations of our salesmen and are in most cases their personal friends, attracted by the success they are meeting in selling our line. On the assumption that "birds of a feather flock together," we find it pays when we get one strong salesman to look up his friends. In most cases they are of the same caliber and have the same qualifications, so that when they are employed they make equally good salesmen.

The National Biscuit Company finds some of its best men in the grocery stores where its products are sold over the counter. Salesmen of the company are instructed to keep a weather eye open, wherever they go, for good selling timber. When men are secured in this way they feel that they have made a step forward, and most of them are satisfied to remain with the organization a considerable length of time.

Some specialty houses which require a particularly high grade of salesmen, offer the members of their forces a bonus for securing a recruit who makes good.

9. *College men as salesmen.*—Some concerns desire to secure college men for their sales force. With this end in view they place advertisements in the college papers which are read by both the students and the alumni. They write to college secretaries to secure information with regard to recent college graduates, especially men who worked their way thru college. One firm whose work calls for salesmen possessed of a broad-gauged knowledge of business, keeps in close touch with the employment bureaus at the

various university schools of commerce thruout the country. Another concern secures the university year-books published by the student bodies, which contain the pictures and biographies of the members of the graduating classes. This information furnishes a basis for selecting the men to whom a selling connection is offered.

10. *Previous selling experience.*—Men recruited from the colleges can have had little or no previous experience in salesmanship, except possibly in the selling of small specialties during vacations. Men selected from inside the organization will have had no previous selling experience whatever. The lawyers whom the Buck Stove and Range Company might secure thru the advertisement already mentioned, would have had no previous experience that would be of value in selling, other than the practice in the art of persuasion that they have obtained in courts of law. To insist upon previous selling experience was formerly a hard and fast rule in many concerns, and still is in some. A great many progressive houses, on the other hand, have come to look upon an applicant's lack of previous selling experience as an advantage rather than a drawback, for, in such case, the prospective salesman has no false ideas or mistaken impressions that must be rooted out before he can be instilled with the principles, ideals and policies of the house. His mind is virgin soil.

A man who is trained to sell one thing and who has never sold any other is not so likely to change

from one organization to another as the man who has had a varied experience, which gives him confidence in his ability to sell any commodity. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, the firm that trains the man of no previous selling experience gets his first loyalty and enthusiasm.

11. *Methods of selection.*—If the sales force is to be kept fairly permanent and the changes necessary to keep its ranks full are to be few, and if the training process is not to be wasted on poor material, great care must be taken in the selection of new salesmen. Just as there are those who claim that the clever salesman can determine what manner of man his prospect is by observing the contour and profile of his face and the shape of his head, so there are some who claim that the sales manager can, by a kind of character analysis, determine the merits of a prospective salesman. A certain manager who has been very successful in the selection of salesmen has a theory that long, tapering fingers are indicative of tact and diplomacy, and that a head set well forward denotes keen observation. One of the largest automobile companies in the country is basing the selection of its salesmen to some extent on an observation of the nerve centers of the hand.

There are a number of such theories and systems, and they are more or less systematically followed by some sales managers. On the other hand, President Cottingham of the Sherwin-Williams Company says, that no hard and fast rules can be laid down for se-

lecting the successful salesman. All that one can do, he claims, is to come as close as possible by relying on common horse-sense to steer him straight. A large majority of the able sales managers agree with this view. This does not mean that an applicant cannot be judged fairly satisfactorily by means of the essential qualifications of a salesman, which are set forth in the first part of this book, nor does it mean that there are not certain definite methods of securing information on which a sound judgment may be based.

12. *How does the salesman sell his own services?*—There is probably no better way of finding out the ability of a man as a salesman than to observe him closely in his efforts to sell his services. What sort of a presentation does he make? Are his facts well marshalled and are his selling points well stated? Sales managers are adopting this more and more as one of their most important tests in selecting men. The sales manager will make a mental note of the applicant's first impression upon him. In the course of the interview he will endeavor to discourage the applicant's aspiration to join the organization. Then he will observe closely just how the man acts under this discouragement.

A manager for a certain big life insurance company tests a man's determination and self-confidence by picturing to him the darkest aspects of selling life insurance. He tells the man of the hundreds of salesmen who fail, of the rebuffs he will meet and the discourtesy he must face. If the applicant appears to

be discouraged by this recital, the manager considers him unfit for life insurance work.

Another sales manager uses a carefully chosen list of questions. Perhaps the most important is that which requires the applicant to tell why he thinks he can sell the commodity in question. His answer does much to reveal his attitude toward salesmanship in general, and leads to an unguarded discussion of his ambitions.

13. *Why does he desire to join the organization?*—The reason given for the desire to join the selling organization should be carefully considered by the sales manager. A remark which is commonly made by applicants for selling positions is: "I understand that there is big money to be made in this line." Naturally, possible earnings will be an important consideration with every applicant; but it is a peculiar fact that in selling, as in any other business, the man who takes up the work because there is big money in it, is not always the one to realize the large earnings. Furthermore, while earning possibilities in different lines vary somewhat, there is no line so devoid of large earning possibilities that some men in it are not enjoying large incomes, nor is there any line so lucrative but that the incomes of some of the men in it provide only the barest necessities of life. And it will be found that a large proportion of these mediocre men entered the business solely because "there was big money in it."

The opportunities for large earnings offered by a

selling proposition should never be the sole reason—or the preeminent one—for a man's desire to take it up. The sales manager should give the "big money" man some straight talk along this line. He should point out that the first thing for the applicant to decide is, whether or not he sincerely likes the proposition and will put his whole heart and soul behind it; and that the second thing to decide is whether or not he possesses the qualifications and training necessary to sell the particular proposition under consideration.

The applicant whose desire to join a selling organization arises chiefly from the belief that the product is the best in its field, that there is a waiting demand for it which he can reach and satisfy, that the house policies behind the product are right and ethically high, that the cooperation given by the house to its salesmen will insure his success, and that he is peculiarly well qualified by training and experience to sell that particular article, will generally be found among those who eventually earn the "big money."

14. *Preliminary correspondence.*—The sales manager will find it advantageous to have some preliminary correspondence with the prospective salesman if he lives at a distance. After the application has been received the writer should be sent a formal application blank. This blank with the previous correspondence will serve to determine whether or not the sales manager will be justified in paying the expense of a visit of the applicant to headquarters for the purpose of an interview. When the applicant is situated where

he can reach the sales manager's office with little or no expense, the invitation to call may follow the first letter. Then, if he makes a good impression the formal application will be turned over to him after the first interview with the request that he either send it in or bring it in person.

15. *Interviewing the applicant.*—The first interview should be friendly and informal from the beginning, and it should be interspersed with such questions as have been indicated, and others of a similar nature. The applicant should be encouraged to give an accurate account of his business life; the sales manager should take care to observe whether any lapses of time are left unaccounted for. It is advisable to ask the applicant as a test question whether or not he stands ready to furnish a bond, and this irrespective of whether or not a bond is required. The reason that a man gives for wishing to make a change will furnish a side-light on his character and the truthfulness of his answers can usually be gauged by their straightforwardness. To quote Mr. Cottingham again:

> In selecting salesmen I endeavor to find out whether the applicant is dead in earnest in seeking a position with us. I try to find out if he has a consuming desire to make a success of himself in the world, or if he is merely looking for a job. I want to know if our business and the position he seeks, appeal to him as the right place to work out a business career.

The sales manager can test the applicant's resourcefulness by outlining some situation commonly met in

the field, and asking him how he would handle it. For example, the Addressograph Company selects some dealers in the trade with which the applicant is familiar. An imaginary presentation is described, carrying the applicant up to the point where the dealer makes some such statement as: "I can fully appreciate the value of your proposition, but I have been in this business now for forty years and, as you see, have the best business in town. I have never advertised at all, yet my competitor down the street spends a great deal for publicity of all kinds and does about half as much business. So you see, I would not consider it, and even if I were inclined to advertise, my clerks can do the addressing in their spare time." The applicant is then asked how he would handle this situation. His answer, tho it is not expected that it will be a finished one, will show how resourceful he is.

The sales manager should have the applicant come back to his office several times on one pretext or another, to discover whether or not he "wears well." This is especially important if the line is a staple one where customers are to be visited repeatedly, for here the personality with lasting qualities—with the capacity for making and holding friends—is of vital importance. It goes without saying that the specialty salesman, too, should have qualities that wear well. It is a good idea to introduce the applicant around the office and pass him from one to another for short friendly chats so that their impressions may be added to those of the sales manager.

There will undoubtedly be applicants whose ability to do business will be unquestioned, but whose ability to do it on a right basis may well be questioned because of a flashy cleverness, or an attitude toward their profession which is perhaps not very high ethically. These considerations should always be carefully weighed; sometimes they may be frankly discussed with the applicant.

Naturally, the applicant for a salesman's position will, except in rare instances, appear at his best. He will be freshly shaved, his linen will be spotless, his clothes freshly brushed and his shoes carefully shined. There is, however, a "dressed-for-the-occasion" look which the sales manager will learn to recognize. There is, on the other hand, a certain well-groomed appearance—the result of habit—which cannot be acquired in a day and which will be in evidence even tho a man's clothing be not in the best of condition. Such habitual carefulness includes care of the teeth, hair, finger-nails and skin. The quality and condition of the linen, shoes and clothing that a man wears largely indicate a man's business and social caliber. Often an applicant who shows up strong in an interview at the sales manager's desk, upon being invited to a more or less exclusive hotel for a meal will appear so unaccustomed to places of the kind, and will show so evident an embarrassment and indecision as to the proper thing to do, as to cause the sales manager to change his opinion about him.

The importance of these more or less social consid-

erations will vary according to the proposition to be sold. A salesman whose business is with the retail grocery trade does not require an intimate knowledge of the social amenities; on the other hand, the salesman who calls on presidents and other executives of large corporations should be able to take luncheon gracefully at the other's club, or even at his home. And the man who is not as well dressed and as well groomed as the executives upon whom he calls, will usually show a lack of poise and be ill at ease in his prospect's presence. The fact is, he is lacking in an important essential for that kind of selling work. Similarly, a mature man with a great many years of business experience behind him, but whose earnings have been far below the amount he may justly be expected to make from his proposition, will generally be found to possess a fundamental business weakness which will prevent his succeeding with any proposition. This is not always true, but the sales manager is justified in assuming that it is the case unless there is substantial evidence to the contrary.

A man's ability to produce a large volume of business should not be the only measure of his right to join a selling organization or to stay with it; the question should always be considered, whether he lends dignity to his house and whether, as a representative, he does his concern a lasting good.

Probably the best measure of a salesman's value to his house is: What kind of impression does he leave on those whom he fails to sell?

16. *References.*—Just as soon as the formal application has been filled in, the references given by the salesman should be investigated. There is great diversity of opinion as to the value of commendatory letters from those to whom the applicant refers the sales manager. It is claimed that there are but few people who will give any but a favorable reference in such a case, and it is certainly true that most references do not contain a bald statement of bad qualities, even when the applicant possesses them. Letters of recommendation are for the most part favorable, tho in varying degree. The sales manager will have no trouble in distinguishing between the genial letter that condemns by faint praise, and the sincerely enthusiastic letter that really indicates a good opinion. Furthermore, the character of the references will go to show the applicant's standing in the community.

17. *Application blanks.*—A form of application for prospective salesmen which is in use in the sales department of a highly successful specialty organization is here given. It is recommended for use, with any changes, of course, that the individual business may render necessary.

PROSPECTIVE SALESMAN'S RECORD BLANK

(Ordinarily this blank should be accompanied by a letter setting forth more fully your experience, aims and personal characteristics.

Name in full .....
Temporary address (how long) .....
Permanent address .....

Age..... Height..... Weight.....
Religion .....
Married or single..... Nationality.....
If married, how many children?.....
How many people are dependent on you?.....
Present occupation.....
Name and line of business of concern you are with.....
Where and in what way have you been employed during your last five positions?

(Give the last place on the first line and work backward)

	Date	Employer	Business	Address	Position	Salary
5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Give reasons for leaving each employer. Answer in each case separately and specifically.

5.....
4.....
3.....
2.....
1.....

Can you furnish a bond?.....
Education .....
What have you studied since leaving school, and how much?..
What do you read regularly?.....
How do you use your spare time?.....
Business experience.....
Give three references.....
Have you ever had a serious illness?.....
What is the state of your health at present?.....
Are you an occasional user of alcoholic beverages?.....
What and how much?.....
Are you a member of any club or society?.....
Specify .....

Average earnings per week for last year..... For last two years.....For last five years.....
How much income must you have to meet your necessary living expenses?.....
What amount of earnings would satisfy you?.....
Do you believe in saving any surplus?.....
Reasons for changing occupation.....
Why are you a salesman or why do you desire to become a salesman? .....
What do you consider your strongest qualifications in selling? .....
What do you think you lack?.....
Reasons for wishing to connect with this concern.....
How soon could you actively take up our work?.....
Territory preferred.....

18. *Young men preferred.*—Young men are to be preferred as recruits. There is a longer period of service ahead of them. They have greater possibilities for improvement and development than older men, whose habits of thought and action have become fixed. The money invested in training a man twenty-seven years old, is much better spent than the same amount would be in training a man fifty years old, who could turn in the same amount of business. Furthermore there is always the danger that an applicant who has not made a good connection before he is thirty or thirty-five years of age, may have some characteristics that will tend to make him a disloyal salesman or a drifter. The drifter may be a good salesman and may be doing himself good in his drifting, but no sales manager wants to turn his organization into a training school. Other things being equal, re-

cruits should be picked whose futures are before them and who are willing to cast their lots with the house.

This matter of selecting men for the selling organization is one to which the sales manager may well give some of his best energy. Every man who comes into the organization, takes the training provided and starts out for his territory, represents an investment on the part of the company, of actual dollars and cents. Every time a salesman leaves the organization the money invested goes with him. Then, too, it costs just as much to pay the expenses of a mediocre or unsuccessful salesman as it does to finance a successful one, and the overhead properly chargeable against the former is often larger than in the case of the able man. Furthermore, since territory and prospects are distinct assets to any house, few concerns can afford to have their prospects visited by mediocre salesmen or to have their advertising backed up by any but the best representatives obtainable.

REVIEW

What are necessary preliminaries to the organization of a selling force?

How would you go about devising and developing selling methods for any new product you may have in mind?

Enumerate various methods of securing salesmen and indicate the advantages of each method.

Discuss education and previous experience required of salesmen.

Would you favor developing salesmen from the inside? Why?

How would you as a salesman go about determining the futures of applicants for sales positions?

Is selling ability the only thing you would consider?

CHAPTER III

BUILDING AN ORGANIZATION—TRAINING SALESMEN

1. *Need for training methods.*—A sales manager for a cotton-print house who had been ridiculing the idea of spending time and money to give new salesmen a definite training course, states that on an average only one in ten of the men he added to his selling organization eventually made good. In strong contrast to this the sales manager of a certain high-grade specialty business, whose training methods were under discussion, was able to point to a class of twenty men turned out six months before, all the members of which were still with the concern and producing business. There was a time when a man with more or less natural selling ability was hired, given a sample case and started for his territory with a few parting instructions. This method is recognized today as being wasteful of both salesmanship material and territory. The salesman as well as the sales manager realizes the advantages of formal training preparatory to field work and, with few exceptions, the able salesman who joins a new organization will welcome the opportunity to enter the training class.

2. *The man in charge of training.*—Too great em-

phasis cannot be laid on the necessity of having in charge of the training class a leader who will win the respect and friendship of its members. He should be a man who has seen active service in selling the company's product. He should have a thoro knowledge of the product; a thoro knowledge of the best selling methods as they have been worked out by the men in the field and a thoro knowledge of the fundamental principles of salesmanship. In addition, he should possess a teacher's mind and the ability to lay out comprehensive and interesting lectures. The training class is of sufficient importance to warrant the sales manager's taking charge of it himself if he cannot find an assistant who measures up to these requirements.

3. *Divisions of training.*—There should be two main divisions of the course of training: instruction at the home office, and coaching in field work. The house instruction may be divided into a study of the fundamental principles of salesmanship and a consideration of the selling methods of the particular product in question, the house policies and any other special subject a knowledge of which may have been found essential in the selling of the product. The coaching in the field may also have two subdivisions; the making of presentations to actual prospects by the recruit, and a criticism of his methods by the coach; and the making of presentations by the coach, while the new salesman carefully observes his methods.

Little need be said here of training new men in the principles of salesmanship. It is enough to say that

a course of instruction can be planned from the material contained in this book. But the methods of handling the other parts of the house training and of conducting the field instruction, we shall look into in some detail.

4. *House training; preparing recruits for class work.*—The best practice in connection with the house instruction, is to convene training classes at those times of the year when the prospect of a busy season or the planning of an extensive campaign renders the training of new men particularly important. It is obviously unwise to complete the training of the new men during a period when business is dull or selling is difficult. For example, the month of July is a low-peak month in specialty selling, and to place new salesmen in their territories at this time might discourage good men at the outset. Experience has proved that the best results will be obtained by bringing the new men into the annual sales convention and convening the training class immediately afterward. The enthusiasm and knowledge gained at the convention will thus supplement that secured in the training class. New men instructed in this manner get started much more quickly and do a larger volume of business than men trained at other periods of the year.

Usually the men who are to be trained are picked out at least a month prior to the date set for the convening of the class. From the time they are chosen, the new men should get letters from the house daily just as the old men do, and they should also receive

the house organ regularly. The instructor will save a great deal of valuable time by utilizing this month for preliminary instruction. Each day a piece of the house literature should be sent, accompanied by a warm, friendly letter pointing out the strong selling points contained in the printed material. The new men should be told that they will be quizzed on each of these pieces of literature during the period of house training. If a standard presentation is to be committed to memory, this is a good time to send it out.

At this time also, the equipment which the salesman will carry with him into the field should be sent, either all at once or piece by piece. Its use will already have been explained in the standard presentation. One concern in order to give this procedure some interest, first sends the leather bag in which the equipment is to be carried and then gradually fills the bag. Letters accompanying the various pieces emphasize this idea of "filling the bag." The prospective salesman should have his complete equipment at least two weeks before he comes into the class, in order that he may practise his delivery of the standard presentation with the equipment, endeavoring to produce and handle each piece at the proper time and in the proper manner.

If the salesman is to be required to give this talk verbatim before going into the field, it will be well to insure an early start on it by making his ability to deliver it satisfactorily a prerequisite to entrance into the sales training class. He should be required to

call upon the instructor several days before the class opens in order that he may be examined on this subject. If this is not done, the prospective salesman will delay committing his talk to memory. Then one of three things will happen: his entrance upon field work will be delayed or he will go to his territory only half prepared, or the nerves of both student and instructor will be worn to a frazzle by forced study.

The National Cash Register Company, instead of selecting untried men for their training classes, invite only those to come to Dayton at the expense of the Company to attend the sales school, who have already made good selling cash registers under the direction of a district manager or a sales agent for a period of six months Where this method is followed, a great deal of the preliminary work described here will be unnecessary. This is true also of cases where new members for the sales force are secured from within the organization.

5. *Opening the training class.*—After the instructor has given a brief talk, outlining the ground to be covered by the course, there should be a speech of welcome by the sales manager and a talk on opportunity and house ideals by the biggest company executive available. During the training course, the men in charge of the various departments should address the class. There should be a talk by the head of the service department, in which the latter should promise to cooperate with the men in the building of sales. The credit man should discuss credit risks and point out

ways in which the salesman can cooperate with him. The advertising manager should explain how the salesman may take the utmost advantage of the house's publicity. It will be found advisable to make arrangements for executive officers and department heads to have lunch with the members of the class, for during such informal social intercourse discussions arise, friendships are formed and the new men become well acquainted with those in the organization who are to handle their business. The spirit of loyalty which is engendered in the new men in this way, and the knowledge of the house spirit and house ideals that he gains, are among the most valuable acquisitions that he can carry into the field with him.

6. *Special instruction in different lines.*—There will be some special subjects related to the product, in which the new salesman will need instruction. The nature of this instruction will depend entirely on what the product is. For example, men selling loose-leaf devices will be instructed in accounting principles and will be given at least a talking knowledge of loose-leaf accounting systems. The National Cash Register Company men are shown how to investigate and analyze different types of business with the idea of introducing cash-register systems. The training system of the Willys-Overland Company provides for the student's spending half of each day during the month's training, in the shop or laboratory, studying construction, engine details and tensile and torsional strength of axles and other steel parts. The necessity

for a knowledge of such related subjects should not be overlooked in the training course.

7. *Studying selling methods.*—The new salesman should be taught the best selling plans and selling talks worked out by the men in the field. The usual objections of the prospects should be brought up and the best answers to them given. The appeals that have proved most successful with special classes of prospects should be clearly set forth. If these matters have been put into a selling manual, as is generally the case, the manual may be used as a text-book for this portion of the course.

During the week each member of the class should be required to make at least two presentations of his proposition to one of the other class members. When a presentation is finished, the man who has made it should be given the first opportunity to criticize. Then the instructor in charge of the class should make his criticisms. After that open discussion might be in order.

8. *Talks from the star salesmen.*—One or two of the best salesmen—men who have been responsible for working out some of the sales methods, and who are big producers—should address the men. Care should be taken that the men selected for this purpose should be able to impart information to others, and be capable of making a strong, enthusiastic presentation of their subject. Such men in telling the new salesmen how to sell will carry far more weight than the instructor or even the sales manager.

9. *Length of course and size of class.*—The length of the course of house training differs widely with different companies; a week is about the average length. When highly technical knowledge must be imparted, the period will be much longer. This is true even of the recruit picked from inside the organization, if his duties have not made him familiar with the manufacturing processes. The general tendency is to allow whatever time may be necessary to equip the men thoroly before they go to their territories.

On the last day of the house training the sales manager should call each of the members into his office for individual consultation. After that the class may be closed formally by an address from the sales manager or some other executive. When possible, a pleasant touch is added to a meeting of the entire inside organization in honor of the new men. During the meeting each of the new men may be called upon to talk, while members of the office organization wish them god-speed and assure them of hearty cooperation.

10. *Field training.*—Organizations that have local managers in various territories often depend upon these managers to train the new salesmen in their work in the field. This method works well since the local branch managers are generally good salesmen, good teachers and men who insist that the rules of the house be strictly observed by the new salesman.

11. *Essential qualifications of the coach.*—The coach should be an expert salesman who can be de-

pended upon to secure a satisfactory volume of business while he is demonstrating salesmanship. He should be able to make sales with the new man sitting behind him during the interviews. It is also necessary that he work according to the methods taught by the house. The man who sells chiefly by reason of a forceful personality can, as a coach, do the new man little good. The man who has worked out methods of his own will only confuse the new salesman. The coach should be a hard worker, otherwise the opportunity to inculcate habits of hard work at the outset will be lost.

12. *Principles of coaching.*—The new man is coached by being brought right into the prospect's place of business where he can hear the coach make an actual presentation. The coach, after having greeted the prospect and introduced himself, should introduce the beginner. He will have previously given the beginner instructions to get into the background immediately after the introduction, preferably somewhere behind the prospect where he will not be seen during the interview. The coach then proceeds just as if the beginner were not with him. He must become adept at forgetting that the third man is present.

A fundamental principle of coaching requires that the coach stay with the new man until the latter has produced satisfactory business and made some headway in opening the territory. For this reason, it is not well to set a definite time limit on the coaching period. The coach's task is not, however, merely to

make sales in the presence of the new man. It is just as important for him to allow the new man to make presentations and endeavor to close business. After each of these presentations, the coach should criticize the beginner's methods and make suggestions for their improvement. The beginner should, if possible, have taken some business himself before the coach leaves him.

Usually the work of the coach either makes the new man enthusiastic and develops him into a producer, or it discourages him and leaves him a non-producer. The coach should guard against the latter possibility, and should endeavor to impress upon the new man the importance of loyalty and hard work, as well as the necessity of devoting thought and study especially to the commodity.

13. *Use of a special coach.*—Salesmen who originally worked out the selling methods for the product are in many instances used to train the new men. Frequently, however, these men may not be suitable for this work. Some houses, on the other hand, have men who do nothing but coach. When they are not breaking in new men they help any of the older salesmen who may be running a little low in volume of sales. If such a coach can be kept busy, this is a good method. The disadvantage of the plan is that it will be impossible for one or even two or three men to coach all the members of a class of ten or twelve men within a reasonable time.

14. *Use of the salesman in the territory as coach.*—

A method more generally followed is to use the best salesmen as coaches. The new man stays with the older salesman for a week and the latter receives extra compensation for giving this instruction. For example, in high-class specialty lines, the older salesman is paid a fixed sum for a week's coaching, in addition to his commission for any sales that he makes while he is demonstrating. While this method has worked satisfactorily, it has some disadvantages. The salesman to whom the new man is sent may not work hard, regularly, or systematically, and if this is the case, he will set a bad example. He may be careless about carrying out the instructions of the house. He may sell on personality or by different methods from those taught the new man. He may not be able to sell with a third man present or he may dislike having to do so. Furthermore, the average salesman is unable to sit calmly by while a cub practises on a good prospect.

15. *Group methods of field training.*—Leadership of the right kind renders it possible to coach the class in a body. Under this method a town, or a closely-knit territory, containing a sufficient number of prospects to keep a dozen men busy for a week, is selected. The assistant sales manager or possibly the sales manager himself takes charge of the class and generally calls at least one other good salesman from the field to assist him in the coaching work.

Arrangements should be made to have the party reach the territory Saturday evening or Sunday morning, for thus the point can be emphasized that each

individual salesman should always plan to reach a town early enough to be able to do the necessary preliminary organization work without using for the purpose any of the time that he should spend seeing prospects. The territory is organized just as the individual salesman will be expected to organize his territory when he reaches it. Names of prospects are secured from the general directory, the telephone directory and other sources, and put on the prospect cards.

In some cases the coach will secure a file of local newspapers for at least two weeks past and instruct his charges to read several of them so as to become acquainted with the general atmosphere of the town and secure a knowledge of its activities and its people. Sometimes a reading of the newspapers will suggest definite leads, or will give additional information on those secured from other sources.

16. *Laying out the field.*—A map of the town should be cut up according to districts, and prospects in each district noted. Then each salesman should be assigned a district. A map of his district should be given to each man so that he will lose no time in getting acquainted with the geography of the town, or travel long distances between prospects. If the party arrives Saturday night or Sunday morning, all of this preliminary organization work can be finished in time to allow the party to go out Sunday afternoon in several different groups to get a knowledge of the territory by actual observation.

The whole party will thus be ready to start work without delay the first thing Monday morning. The leader and the salesman who is assisting him will each take one of the new men for the day. Each day following they will take different men. Every day the men who are not working with the assistant sales manager or the other coach, will work by themselves.

17. *Week's program.*—The members of the party should be instructed to make out their daily reports at the close of each day, just as soon as they return to headquarters. Then, while they are still warmed up, they should plan their work for the following day. A half-serious rule, that no man be allowed to come to the dinner table until he has performed this work, will be found effective. The idea is to insist from the start on business-like habits that make for success. It is an excellent practice to set a standard for a day's work in order that the new salesman may form the habit of hard, consistent work for six days a week. After dinner an informal discussion of the day's experiences should be held.

During the week, each new man besides having had some experience of his own, will have had an opportunity to see business taken by one or the other of the coaches. At the close of the week they will go to their respective territories fairly well prepared. Probably the biggest thing in this method of training is the spirit which it creates. Under the leadership of a man who can fraternize with the members of the class, the week will be one not only of hard work, but

of good fellowship and harmony. At its close there should be pleasant memories on the part of all, of the week which they have spent together. Members of the class are likely to promise to write to one another. Sometimes a small organization of the training class may be formed, with the spirit of making a better record than previous classes; thus a friendly rivalry is engendered which is helpful alike to the salesmen and to the organization. Above all, after such preparation, a group of men will go to their work thoroly trained in business-like habits and in the careful observance of the house rules.

In a great many lines, this group method of coaching is not practicable, because prospects are necessarily few and far between. In the case of a specialty organization where individual sales are difficult, there is grave danger that the coaches themselves will sometimes fail to close a sale. If they do the whole class will be affected disadvantageously. On the other hand, if the new men are not grouped the failure of one coach will affect a single man only. The group method has the advantage of being considerably cheaper for the firm than individual coaching.

18. *Cost versus results.*—The cost of putting each salesman into the field with the training that has been described is much higher than the cost of the older method of sending the salesman out the same day that he was engaged, but results warrant the outlay. Under the old methods only a small fraction of the men made good and brought a profit to the house. Under

the new method, the carefully selected man who fails to become a producer is an exception. The money spent on equipping and starting out the nine out of ten men who failed under the old method was a dead expense. The money spent in training men as they are trained today is an investment—and an investment which pays large dividends.

REVIEW

These training methods cost a lot of money. How would you justify the large outlay per man?

What should properly be included in house training? Outline a tentative house training course for the salesmen of your firm.

Discuss field training and the coacher. How would you plan to give the salesmen of your concern their field training?

Discuss the possibilities of non-resident training methods both as the only method used and as an adjunct to house and field training.

CHAPTER IV

SELLING METHODS AND THE SELLING EQUIPMENT

1. *Constant necessity for new methods.*—Just as the new men should continue to study after they have been graduated from the training class, so the sales manager himself should continue to work up new selling talks and new selling methods after the first field experiments have produced methods that sell the goods. Constant study is necessary, not only because improved methods will result in increased sales, but because methods used over and over again become stale to the average salesman and he loses his effectiveness in using them. New methods, even tho they are no better than those discarded, will usually result in increased business for the salesman. Later he may go back to the discarded methods and because they again seem fresh to him, use them with the old-time effectiveness.

2. *Source of new selling suggestions.*—There is only one source from which new selling talks can be secured—the men in the field. That does not mean that the sales manager or his assistants may not go into the field, test certain theories and finding them satisfactory, pass them on to the organization as the result of experience. If the ideas of the house are

not tested in this manner, they should be explained to a few of the best salesmen with the request that they be tried out in field work. For example, the salesmen in a certain organization, which had just inaugurated its first advertising campaign, complained that the prospects who made inquiry of the firm in response to the advertising learned in that way all about the proposition, and that the salesmen consequently had little to talk about. The sales manager's answer to that argument was that this knowledge on the part of the prospect was an advantage and, by relieving the salesman of the necessity of going into details, gave him an opportunity to talk in terms of advantages and results. What was needed in such a case, the manager decided, was a method of presentation entirely different from that which was necessary when a prospect had no previous knowledge of the product. He communicated with several of the best men in the field and sent them a tentative presentation, with the request that they try it. When this procedure was found to work well, the new method was given to all the men as the result of the experience of the best salesmen.

In every organization, there are some salesmen who are appreciably stronger with some one class of prospects than they are with any other. The sales manager should ascertain why this is the case, discover the methods that those salesmen use and pass them on for the benefit of the other men in the organization. One salesman presenting mechanical devices may have particularly natural and effective methods of introducing

certain points and impressing the prospect with their importance. Another may have devised subtle methods for securing the prospect's participation in the sale. A salesman for an advertised commodity may have worked out methods of showing what advertising is being done or what is to be done, or otherwise demonstrating the value of advertising campaigns to secure an order. The salesman selling to dealers may be particularly strong in showing the dealer that the goods will move, or he may have definite plans to suggest for moving them, such for example, as the demonstration plan for moving knife sharpeners, which has been described in a preceding chapter. One member of the organization may have a new way of handling equipment, and another, new selling points or new methods of presenting old ones. Another may work up strong reserve talks to be used where the sale is not closed by the main presentation. Still another may have effective ways of anticipating and removing the usual objections that a prospect presents. Again, a salesman may have an entirely new presentation to be used where it is necessary to call a second time on a prospect.

The nature of the information that the sales manager will wish to secure from the members of his organization will be dictated by the particular line of business. It is one of his most important duties to see that the selling talks and methods that have proved successful are put into use for the benefit of the salesman and of the business.

3. *Methods of securing suggestions.*—The sales manager can secure much information in informal talks with his men. He can obtain some from the salesmen's daily letters. A salesman who has secured a good order should be encouraged to explain his experience in detail. He may do this by writing a formal article for publication in the house organ, or he may write a letter to the sales manager, who can then edit it for the house organ. The latter is probably the better method.

Stenographic notes should be taken of every talk that any salesman makes before a training class or at a convention. If one of the best salesmen is at the home office temporarily, it may be well to have the men from nearby territories run in for an hour's talk with him. Small, informal meetings such as these have been found most inspiring and helpful. If the organization is working with the proper spirit, two members cannot get together without exchanging ideas and methods that will be valuable to both. Whenever possible, this getting together should be encouraged; and when salesmen are widely separated, correspondence between them should be promoted.

This securing of selling suggestions is one of those phases of sales-department work which show that loyalty is more than a name. The salesman who is disloyal, or who is a member of an organization that lacks the right spirit, will hug to himself his methods of getting business with the result that there can be no profit to other salesmen from his experience. The

loyal member of an enthusiastic organization, on the other hand, will pass suggestions along without reserve for the benefit of his house, his sales manager and his brother salesmen.

4. *Standard selling talk.*—The selling points and the selling methods may or may not be put into the shape of a standard presentation. Such a presentation includes a well-considered talk and method of handling equipment, and is generally a composite of the best selling practice. The presentation should include a speech to be learned verbatim, and instructions for the handling of the equipment during the talk. Sales managers are divided as to the usefulness of a set speech in presenting a proposition. The National Cash Register Company which originated the standard presentation, at one time insisted upon their salesmen's learning the talk verbatim, but have now abandoned this method. They now instruct their salesmen to have a thoro knowledge of the product and of all its selling points, but never to make up their minds before they are face to face with the prospect, exactly what they intend to say to him. They should rather let circumstances govern their opening remarks and selling talk. This does not mean, of course, that the National Cash Register Company has discontinued working out the best way to present each selling point of their machine, or to anticipate objections which may be raised. The talk which their salesmen use today is a combination of standardized selling points.

Nothing will destroy a man's initiative more quickly than speaking a set piece over and over every day, and approaching every prospect in exactly the same manner. Furthermore, it is difficult for most men to make a talk which they have learned by heart, sound like their own, and a standard talk is useless if the prospect discovers that it is something learned by rote. It is true also that merely giving a standard talk will secure but few orders. Even where it is used, additions must be made to tie up the proposition with the prospect's interests; and certain parts may have to be omitted. Both sales manager and salesmen should keep in mind that the men who have been principally responsible for the working out of the standard presentation are big producers, who would not allow themselves nor expect others to fall into the rut of saying exactly the same thing over and over again.

5. *Flexible use of the standard presentation.*—It is a good general rule that a standard presentation should be worked out, and standard reserve talks and answers to objections should be prepared. The printed talk given to the salesmen should have ample foot-notes. Sometimes these will be more voluminous than the presentation itself, and possibly more important. A thoro explanation in these foot-notes of why certain things are said and done at certain steps of the presentation will do much to persuade the salesman of the usefulness of the standard presentation and, more important still, may suggest to him other

methods of accomplishing the same object which may be more effective or better suited to him personally.

There was a time not very long ago when a great many houses insisted that all their salesmen, old and new alike, should learn a standard presentation and give it verbatim. It is generally recognized today that there can be no advantage in insisting upon this in the case of an experienced salesman. Whether or not the new men should be required to learn the presentation word for word, will depend upon the complexity of the product sold. When the proposition is simple it may be necessary merely for the salesman to get an idea of the general outline and sequence of ideas in the selling talk, and present them in his own words. When, on the other hand, the proposition necessitates an elaborate explanation or requires the salesman to educate his prospect in the principles of the proposition, it has been found that the success of new men at the outset is generally in proportion to the accuracy of their knowledge of the standard presentation and their ability to use it effectively.

The new salesman should study the standard presentation thoroly and should be able to give it word for word, but it is not expected that he should use it always. The standard form is a clear-cut method of presentation which the salesman should follow until he develops methods of his own. When that step is reached, it will furnish him with a track to run upon in making his own talk, and will give him something to say on the days which come to most salesmen, when

he cannot be original. In short, the new salesmen should learn the standard presentation thoroly—and then gradually forget it.

6. *Equipment.*—The term, equipment, includes everything that the salesman carries to aid him in making the sale, even down to the personal cards with which he is furnished by the house. It includes aids to selling, ranging all the way from the cold, figure-strewn prospectus of the bond salesman to the fifteen or twenty trunks of the general dry goods man. Much as the salesman's equipment may vary in different lines, there are certain definite principles that are applicable in any case—in regard to both convenience of form and force of selling appeal.

Special care should be taken not to overload the salesman. When he carries the equipment, it should be easily portable and not so heavy as to tire him and sap his energy early in the day. This carrying about of a heavy equipment has a great deal more to do with keeping down a man's volume of sales than most sales managers realize. If the equipment consists of samples carried in trunks, care should be taken lest the individual pieces exceed the weight that may be carried as baggage over the railroads. Whether or not there will be facilities for handling a large trunk line in the town to be visited has to be considered. For example, a Cleveland blanket manufacturing concern which usually equips its salesmen with several large trunks has recently started a salesman in an automobile making small towns off the railroad. It has been

necessary to cut down his equipment to one trunk and to show the balance of the line by catalog and samples of material.

Trunks or other carriers of equipment should be so constructed that the contents will be accessible. Wardrobe trunks are largely used now for clothing lines. Some goods will lend themselves to an effective display when fastened in the trays of a trunk. Shoes and millinery may be shown in this manner. The sales manager makes a mistake if he slights these matters on the ground that the salesman has plenty of time in the evening to arrange his display and can pack while he is waiting for his train. The salesman has just so much energy, and as much of that energy as possible should be devoted to the actual selling of goods.

7. *Equipment with an imaginative appeal.*—The equipment should be designed, if possible, so that it will appeal to the imagination. The salesmen who sell apple-growing lands in a Montana tract are equipped with a small case in which to carry samples of the apples. A story is told of a grocery salesman who set out to sell a large consignment of prunes. He secured a number of pictures of the Santa Clara Valley in California where the prunes were grown. He sent for pictures of the Loire Valley, in France, where the slips of his prunes were grown. He carried samples both of imported French prunes and of the prunes he was selling. As part of his demonstration he would cut one of each kind, and with the aid of a mag-

nifying glass he would show that the texture of his domestic prune was just as fine as that of the imported variety, which was much more expensive.

Facsimile letters of indorsement from purchasers are coming more and more into favor in lines where the use of such letters is practicable. They are valuable not only for the definite statements they make in regard to the product, but also because they indicate the class of people who have bought it. Great care should be taken to have the reproduction look as much as possible like the original.

8. *Visualizing the product.*—The equipment should be such that the prospect may visualize the product. Working models of reduced size are sometimes used. A certain salesman selling dog collars takes with him a thorobred brindle bulldog on which to display his wares. A large New York concern manufactures a folding stereoscope that is very handy for salesmen, and supplies firms using them with appropriate pictures which can be shown in this machine.

In a great many cases the moving picture bids fair to supersede these other means of visualizing the product. A small projecting machine which the salesman can carry with him has been devised, and concerns have been organized to prepare commercial films for the use of salesmen. This method is used to show machinery in operation. Explosives are being demonstrated by moving pictures. One concern that makes automobile tires, is showing by moving pictures taken at its plants, the process of manufacture

and the rigid tests to which the tires are subjected. Styles in dress, also, are being demonstrated in this manner on living models.

9. *Making the equipment compact, uniform and complete.*—It often requires considerable ingenuity to plan and arrange the equipment so that it can be easily carried and be at the same time so complete that the salesman will never find that he lacks anything that would aid him in making the sale. The equipment should always be so arranged as to present a uniform and orderly appearance. A number of houses are today working out this problem of compactness and completeness most effectively. The Heinz Company, for example, having found that it was impracticable for every salesman to carry a sample of each of the "57," and that the few they could carry were burdensome, have equipped their men with catalogs which picture the various processes of manufacture in the Heinz plant, and which show each of the products full size in color. There are, in addition, pictures of display arrangements for each line of goods. The salesmen for a New York linoleum house, who formerly carried several trunks of samples, are today equipped only with an ordinary brief-case which contains several samples of linoleum that show the quality of the goods. The various designs in which the goods may be had, instead of being shown by samples, are pictured in full colors in a book of about one hundred pages.

10. *Equipment without salesmen.*—A large shoe-

manufacturing company has recently perfected a system whereby a sample trunk, unaccompanied by a salesman, is circulated among its customers. The trunk is consigned to a dealer who, upon making his selections from it, sends it on to the next dealer on the route. This method is used to supplement the work of the salesman between visits. A large machinery manufacturer is working on a plan to route moving pictures of his machinery in much the same manner; the scheme includes an arrangement with local moving-picture houses to show the pictures privately before prospects. This method is capable of application in many lines.

11. *Keeping the equipment fresh.*—The equipment should always be as attractive as possible. The morocco wallet of the bond salesman lends dignity to his proposition. Good substantial trunks give the impression that the firm is efficient and businesslike in handling its goods. The heterogeneous mass of catalogs carried by the salesmen of many wholesale houses, can be made attractive by uniform leather covers. Possibly the whole lot might be put into one neat leather case.

The sales manager should always insist that the salesman keep his equipment in the pink of condition. It gets worn and dog-eared so gradually that the salesman may fail to notice that it has become dingy. Many sales managers require the salesman to set aside one evening a week in which to go over his equipment and send in requisitions for replenishments. In some

lines, cloaks and suits, clothing and men's hats, for example, it is impossible to duplicate samples because only one of a kind is made up for each salesman and work is not started on the regular line until after all orders have been received. In this case the salesman should be impressed with the importance of keeping samples clean and in good condition, and the firm should provide adequate means for his doing so.

12. *Arrangement and use of equipment.*—The maxim, "A place for everything and everything in its place," applies with especial force in the matter of equipment. The salesman should be able to lay his hands on any single piece without the slightest delay. A break in the selling talk, due to the salesman's inability to find a particular piece of equipment or to locate a certain indorsement letter is likely to interfere seriously with the prospect's interest and destroy the possibility of a sale. The saleman should repack his equipment in such a way that he will not have to rearrange it before the next presentation.

Above all, the sales manager should impress upon his salesman the important fact that they should use the equipment to illustrate the selling talk and not the talk to explain the equipment.

13. *Sales manual.*—It is not unusual to embody in a sales manual all information on selling talks and sales methods, the handling of equipment, appeals to special classes of prospects, the reserve talks and answers to objections. If a standard selling talk has been devised, this with its foot-notes will occupy a

prominent place in the manual. Even tho no standard presentation is included, the best methods of approach, demonstration and closing should be given and the various selling points of the product should be enumerated, in order that the salesman thoroly familiar with the manual may present his proposition in an interesting and convincing manner and may have at his command answers to questions and objections.

The manual should also contain information concerning such office procedure and house policies as is necessary for the salesman. It may contain a history of the house and of the development of the product. Nor are articles of a purely inspirational nature by any means out of place.

14. *A suggested table of contents.*—The nature of the contents of any sales manual will depend upon the requirements of the particular business. Following is a suggested table of contents for a complete loose-leaf sales manual. It has been compiled principally from the sales manual of a New York concern.

1. House Policies.
2. Historical Sketch of the House.
3. The Inside Organization.
4. Discussion of the Principles of Salesmanship.
5. Detailed Description and Discussion of the Product (unless this is fully covered in other literature; or, the products may be so many and so varied as to require a separate catalog or price list, and if so, this section may be omitted).

6. Selling Equipment.
7. Standard Presentation.
8. Notes on the Standard Presentation.
9. Selling Points.
   (A) With different classes of business.
   (B) With different classes of prospects.
10. Sidelights and Stories which can be Included in the Selling Talk.
11. The Answers to the Usual Objections.
12. Advertising Activities and Policies.
13. Instructions How to Organize and Handle Territory.

15. *Manual should provide information and inspiration.*—The sales manual should be prepared not only to serve as a text-book for new men, but also to be a source of information and inspiration to the older men of the force. The sales manager should encourage the men in the field to read it frequently, so that they may be constantly reminded of the good selling points and the good selling talks which they may have forgotten. The preparation of the sales manual is a task worthy of the utmost care, for if it is really to serve its purpose, it must be inspirational in tone and rich in human interest.

16. *Form of the sales manual.*—It is not necessary that the sales manual be elaborate in order to fulfil its functions. The form is secondary in importance to the contents. It is neither necessary nor advisable to have a printed manual where the force is small. Mul-

tigraphed sheets will serve as well. It is a good plan to have the sales manual in loose-leaf form, since this allows for necessary changes and additions, and also renders it possible to make up slightly different manuals that will be suitable for different classes of representatives. For example, certain things included in the sales manuals of branch managers may be omitted from that of salesmen or dealers.

17. *Sources of material for the manual.*—The stenographic reports of the talks given in the training class, and those of the proceedings of the annual sales conventions will serve as the backbone of the sales manual. If the concern has had a house organ for any considerable period it will be replete with valuable selling suggestions, which should be collected, classified and organized. These ideas should be supplemented by information gathered directly from the men in the field. We have already discussed some of the methods of securing information from the salesmen. It is not unusual to go about gathering this information for the sales manual in a more formal manner. The salesmen may be requested to help get up the manual by contributing their best selling talks. They may be asked also to state the objections on the part of prospects which they find most difficult to overcome. The objections should be grouped according to the vocations of those who made them, then the men who are most successful in selling to persons in these vocations should be asked to give their best argument in overcoming the objection in question. They

may also be asked for statements of the methods that they use in approaching and handling prospects in their favorite fields.

A manual prepared in this way meets with favor among the men because they feel that they have helped to write it, and that it contains a digest of all the methods of the best men on the proposition. That is most important. A theoretical or office-made manual —or what amounts to the same thing, one that is considered such by the men—is seldom, if ever, satisfactory. The sales manual in its final form should represent the successful experience of the most capable men in the field. And if the reliable, steady producers of the selling organization come to refer to it as the "Bible," as they do in one organization, so much the better.

18. *Example of introduction to a manual.*—The following is the foreword of a sales manual which has been well received by a selling organization:

> This sales manual was not written in an office. It was compiled from the experience of you men on the firing line. Everything in it, after having been whipped into shape from the experience of the men in the field, was submitted to you for criticisms and suggestions before being put into final form.
>
> It is your sales manual, therefore. It represents at this time a complete statement of all that experience has proved best in the selling of our product. It is put together in loose-leaf form so that this statement will be true no matter when it is read, for the replacing of anything which time may put into the discard, or the adding of the lessons that the future will undoubtedly teach us if we are to continue to progress, is a simple matter.

And to you men on the firing line is assigned the duty and responsibility of seeing that this sales manual is always up to the minute.

A detailed description of the product to be sold would find a place in most sales manuals. But a detailed description of our product is omitted here because the subject received exhaustive treatment in the other literature of the house, which is hereby declared a part of this sales manual.

REVIEW

Why are new methods continually necessary?

From what source must all new selling methods come? How are they best secured?

Discuss the standard selling talk, its advisability, its advantages and disadvantages, and its most effective use.

What is meant by selling equipment? What may properly be expected of it? What is the importance of its having imaginative appeal? The importance of compactness and completeness?

Can the equipment of your salesmen be improved?

Discuss the necessity of a sales manual. How one may be built; its mechanical form; and its contents.

Has your house a sales manual? If not, plan one in all detail. If so, how may it be improved?

CHAPTER V

COMPENSATION AND TERRITORY

1. *What a plan of compensation should accomplish.*—The objects to be considered in fixing the amount of compensation and the manner in which it shall be paid are to secure the type of men desired, to keep them working at maximum efficiency, and to retain them in the organization. In this connection, it should be remembered that in the early days of most concerns a strong type of specialty salesman is needed, and only that type will succeed. Such men require and are entitled to fairly large incomes. As the proposition is more widely advertised and becomes better known, it gradually becomes easier to sell and then a slightly different type of salesmen may reasonably be expected to succeed. With training methods fairly well established, younger men and men without selling experience may be added to the organization. It is not necessary to provide large remuneration for these men at the start. The average cost of making a sale, therefore, can be reduced. This should not be understood to mean that an effort should be made to reduce the incomes of those men who have sold the proposition in its earlier stages. The principle applies only to new men being added to the organization.

2. *Salary and expenses.*—The method of paying salesmen a salary and expenses is the oldest and probably the most prevalent. It affords the sales manager almost perfect control over his men. They can be routed from town to town, instructed how long to stay in a town and whom to see while there. They can be required to make out any reports that the sales manager may deem necessary, and can be instructed to do work other than selling if emergency requires. If the house deems it advisable to deal with small, isolated towns where the sales will be few, and is willing to pay the salesman's salary for doing so, that is the business of the house and not of the salesman. The same principle holds good in the case of missionary work where no immediate sales are probable. A firm which does national advertising to create a consumer demand, and which therefore desires almost perfect distribution will do well to use the salary-and-expenses basis of remuneration.

3. *Some drawbacks of the salary plan.*—The salary-and-expenses method has, however, at least one great disadvantage. The salesman has no immediate incentive to strive unceasingly after big business. Of course, the salesman's salary is usually fixed by adding his salary and expenses and determining what percentage of his gross sales they constitute, and raises are made on this basis at the end of the year. It would seem as if this system would stimulate the men to greater effort but most sales managers would testify that it rather has the effect of causing the sales-

man to slow down when he is producing sufficient business to warrant his present salary. This condition is probably aggravated by reason of the fact that most houses seem averse to allowing a salesman's salary to reach a high figure, even tho the volume of his sales would seem to warrant a very large salary.

4. *Salary and commission.*—To combine the advantage of the salary plan—the decided control that the firm has over the salesman—and the advantage of the straight-commission system—the incentive that it gives salesmen to put forth their best efforts—many houses base their compensation on a combination of salary and commission. The salary is, of course, smaller than if it were the only remuneration, and the rate of commission must be about half, or even less than half, of what could be allowed under the straight-commission system. Under this plan the salesman's expenses may or may not be paid by the house. Some houses, in order to strengthen their control over the man, agree to pay his railroad expenses, but nothing more.

5. *Advantages of the salary-commission plan.*—There are almost countless varieties of the salary-and-commission plan of payment. A usual practice is for the house to pay a commission in addition to the salary only if the salesman takes a prescribed amount of business above his minimum. Up to a certain higher amount, a small commission is paid, and beyond this point, the rate of commission gradually increases for increasing amounts of business. In lines

where the salesman is allowed freedom in quoting prices, he may be informed of the cost of each article and his commission may be figured as a certain percentage of the price that he secures over and above this cost figure. This method, of course, furnishes a strong incentive to the salesman to hold up prices.

As a general rule it will be found that seasoned salesmen, particularly in specialty lines, will prefer to work on a straight-commission basis. The young fellow who has never done any selling, however, is loath to have his remuneration rest on that basis, even if he has had a thoro training. The salary-and-commission system has the advantage over the straight commission plan of attracting new men of this kind to the organization.

Increases in the salesman's compensation under this plan may be made either by increasing his salary and leaving his rates of commission the same, or by leaving his salary the same and increasing the rates of commission. The former will be found the more feasible method if the house has a varied line and a wide range of commission rates on individual items.

6. *Straight commission.*—It is often argued that the house knows what percentage of sales it can afford to pay out in selling expenses and that it will try to avoid exceeding the limit that is set. In its effort to keep these expenses down it often pays less than it had expected to, and in the last analysis the salesman's compensation will always be fixed on a percentage-of-sales basis. Why not, then, pay this percentage out

as commission in the first place? If this is done it furnishes the salesman with a direct incentive, inasmuch as the result of a good week's work is shown immediately in the size of the salesman's weekly remittance. This system virtually makes the salesman a partner of the house, the salesman investing his energy and expenses against the house's capital. If the salesman doubles his results he doubles his earnings. Increases in compensation are taken care of automatically. The house, too, has the advantage of knowing definitely just what its selling expense is going to be. It pays out nothing to the salesman unless orders are actually received.

7. *Disadvantages of the straight-commission plan.* —This plan, too, has its disadvantages. The control of the house over the salesman is weakened. The latter feels that he is paid a commission for getting business and does not consider himself under obligation to make out reports. Even if he allows the house to direct his movements within his territory, he will be sure to blame lack of business upon such control. Usually he will insist that, since his earnings are dependent upon his good judgment, he should be allowed to assume full direction of his own work. It is doubtful whether it is ever possible, by this method, to direct the salesman to the same extent as under a salary system.

There is danger, furthermore, of the salesman's feeling that he is under no obligation to work constantly; he may claim that since his money stops when

he stops, whether he works or not is entirely his own affair. It has been shown that this attitude is likely to cause fluctuation in the amount of business and variations in the expense of handling it at the house. The chances are, too, that territory will not be worked as thoroly as it should be. In some lines, the commission salesman can more readily oversell a dealer than can the salesman who is on a salary. But, while there are these objections to the straight-commission system, loyalty and a proper esprit de corps in the organization will eliminate, to some extent at least, certain of the disadvantages that have been enumerated.

8. *Drawing account.*—Some houses allow a drawing account in connection with the straight-commission plan of compensation. A salesman who has a family to support or other obligations to meet is likely to desire a drawing account to guard against any unexpected delay in reaching a satisfactory volume of sales. Another may wish to equalize his income by taking a stipulated amount each week in place of widely varying commission checks. And it must be admitted that some salesmen expect to be in debt to their concerns constantly. There was a time when drawing accounts were pretty freely granted, and it was not unusual for an unscrupulous individual to be receiving one from each of several different sources. Most houses today, when a drawing account is allowed, insist upon its being regarded strictly as money borrowed, which must be repaid at the first opportunity. Overdrafts are held down, not only because the sales

manager does not wish to place himself in a position where the salesman's leaving would cause a heavy loss to the concern—for overdrafts which are paid up after the salesman leaves are the exception—but because overdrafts mean a reduction of the concern's cash resources.

In a few exceptional cases the concern guarantees the salesman a drawing account. That is, they agree to pay him a certain amount of money periodically for a stipulated time, and this amount is to be deducted from his commissions; but he will be under no obligation to pay back any money if his commissions fall short of the amount of the guaranteed drawing account. In general, the practice of allowing drawing accounts is being much curtailed.

9. *Promotion of salesmen.*—Every salesman, especially if he be a good salesman, is ambitious. While his first goal is to increase his sales and his income as a salesman, he will usually have a latent ambition one day to assume more responsibility on the selling end of the business. It is not to be expected that the salesman will identify the interests of the house with his own unless provision is made for satisfying his ambition. With the sales manager of broad vision, this ambition of the salesman will be reciprocated. The sales manager will be just as anxious for the salesman to develop as the latter is himself. The sales manager should see to it that in all reasonable ways his ambition for the salesman parallels the salesman's ambition for himself.

The salesman may be tied to the house by being allowed to acquire an interest in the company. He may be encouraged to acquire and develop qualifications that will make him first a successful working manager of a territory and later manager of a district office. This should not be difficult. Ordinarily, a growing business—and every business under the right management will be a growing business—can absorb men as fast as they are developed. New departments should be headed by men taken from and developed in the business. There will be no definite limit to the progress of a business directed by men developed in this way and by executives capable of developing such men. It is this vision always before him of the opportunity to secure a position just as big as his ability entitles him to that will grapple the ambitious and able salesman to the house with hooks of steel.

10. *Considerations as to territory.*—Territory is a distinct asset to the house. The sales manager should have a clear idea of the value of this asset and the returns to be expected from it. A territory that is too small will discourage the salesman and prevent his producing a large volume of sales. A territory that is too large will be skimmed, and the house will not get all the business to which it is entitled. In the early stages of a proposition, the territory, in comparison with the number of salesmen, is generally large, and consequently the house can be liberal with territory. Eventually there comes a time, however, when territory must be worked intensively if the house is to con-

tinue to grow. If, when the house has covered as large an area in search of business as the nature of its products will permit, territories are twice as large as they should be, the house will be doing but half the business that would be possible if territories were divided in two and the force of salesmen doubled.

11. *Blocking out territory.*—Figures showing conditions in any locality may be obtained from the following sources: the United States census and other government reports, and trade journals; records of the firm's personal investigations made by the sales manager, his assistants or field representatives; and the publications of listing and directory concerns whose business it is to compile this sort of information.

The sales manager will know what kind of people or firms are possible prospects. From one of the sources enumerated, the number of prospects in the entire area to be covered should be ascertained by subdivisions. For example, if the whole United States is to be covered, the number of prospects in each county may be the basis of apportioning territories. In the case of a jobbing house which serves a more limited area, the number of prospects in each town may be tabulated. Next, the number of prospects that a salesman can call upon daily should be determined. Then it should be decided how often a territory must be thoroly worked. The wholesale grocery house will have its salesman call upon its customers every two weeks. The dry-goods salesman will probably call about four times during the year. In the case of

some specialties where a man is sold but once, it may be well to allow a considerable time to elapse before a particular town or county is gone over again. With the information indicated on hand, it will be possible in most lines, by multiplying the number of prospects that can be seen in a day by the number of days that should elapse between workings of a territory, to estimate the number of prospects that should be contained in the ideal territory.

When the number of prospects has been determined, each territory should be blocked out with a view to making all parts as accessible as possible from some central starting point. Such a system will diminish the amount of railroad fares and enable the salesman to get to his headquarters more frequently. This is especially important when the salesman has a family. Territories in the East are fairly compact while those in sparsely settled districts in the West may cover a considerable area and necessitate much traveling. In other words, the number of prospects in an ideal territory in the West will be smaller than the number in an ideal eastern territory. In apportioning territory, it is well to make sure that each salesman has just a trifle more than he can comfortably handle, rather than less. At first glance this may appear wasteful, but human nature must always be taken into consideration, and nothing will stifle a salesman's ambition or destroy his spirit more quickly than a too restricted working area.

12. *Factors to consider in territory readjustments.*

—The utmost diplomacy should be used in dividing a salesman's territory or taking away parts of it, once it has been assigned to him. It is the consensus of opinion that this cannot be done arbitrarily if the salesman is to be left satisfied and is to continue his work with the right spirit. Here again human nature must be considered and in practice it will be found advantageous to let territories continue larger than they theoretically should be in preference to undermining the spirit of the selling organization and possibly losing some of its best men thru an ill-advised apportionment of territory.

There is a certain concern in Chicago which sells a nationally advertised brand of clothing. The history of this firm is an interesting one. Most of its salesmen have been with the house since its infancy and have grown old and gray in the service. In the early days, work was done in a more or less haphazard fashion—no definite territory was assigned, but each man traveled thru the section of the country which seemed to need him most. As a consequence, today each member of the sales force covers practically the entire country, calling upon the trade which he happens to have built up in the earlier days. The men cross and recross one another's tracks, and naturally railroad bills and expense accounts are much higher than they would be under the restricted-territory plan. The house, anxious to correct the condition, called in an outside sales counselor, who spent some time in giving the situation very careful study. Fortunately

for the firm, this man was sufficiently broad-gauged to report that while the present method of covering the country was not as efficient as it might be, he doubted whether a change to a restricted-territory system could be made without undermining the happiness, and destroying the spirit of the men who had been with the house since the beginning, and to whom the house owed a debt of gratitude for the upbuilding of its business. It was decided, therefore, to continue along the old lines, changing to the plan of geographical territory only as new men were added to the sales organization and excluding from those territories the customers upon whom the old men had been calling for years, until such time as these older members of the sales force were no longer engaged in selling work. When that time came, and not until then, these old accounts should be turned over to the younger men.

Another house which has faced the problem involved in having large territories in the hands of its older men has removed the difficulty by placing junior salesmen in these territories with the consent of the older salesmen and in addition to giving the younger men their regular compensation paying to the older men a small commission on the younger men's business in return for the coaching, direction and inspiration which the senior salesmen give the beginners. It may be laid down as a principle that a territory, altho it may obviously be too large, should never be divided until the man in charge of the territory—especially if he is a good producer and has been with the house any

considerable length of time—has been thoroly sold on the idea and has been convinced that neither his income nor his opportunities of progress will suffer.

13. *Routing the salesman in the territory.*—Where the nature of the business is such that the salesman moves rapidly from one town to another, it is becoming more and more the common practice to route him from the home office, rather than to allow him to plan his own itinerary. This routing must be done with the aid of a railroad map and time-tables, and must be worked out for each individual territory. Naturally, the routing should be, as far as possible, in a straight line—from one town to the next nearest town where there are prospects. Occasionally, however, such an arrangement entails a considerable loss of time for the salesman because of a disadvantageous train schedule. It is quite possible that he might be compelled to wait four hours for a train to the next nearest town, which is, let us say, a half-hour distant, whereas he could make a train to a more distant town immediately and double back without any loss of time. The sales manager may sometimes decide to have the salesman travel by carriage or auto from one town to another, rather than to wait upon the train schedule.

This matter of routing is greatly simplified, of course, if the house—as many now do—provides with automobiles those salesmen who are required to travel rapidly from place to place. The advantages of this plan are many. The cost of maintaining the car, plus the depreciation on it, is not greatly in excess of rail-

road fare, especially if there is any item of excess baggage involved. In territories where the roads are good, a great deal of time is saved by this method. The salesman is enabled to perform little services for the customer which would otherwise be out of the question. For example, one New York grocery house that supplies its men with automobiles, has instructed every salesman to stop at the railroad freight house, before he calls on a customer, and find whether the retailer has any goods waiting there. If he has, the salesman is to telephone the retailer, say that he is going to drop in, and suggest that he bring the goods with him.

The disadvantages of the automobile method of travel are: the danger of breakdown; the fact that a salesman after a ride of any considerable distance may not be as presentable as he should be—especially if he has had tire or engine trouble on the road; the fact that when long distances are to be covered, the salesman cannot travel all night and work all day, as he can if he travels by Pullman.

14. *Apportioning city territory.*—In handling a product the prospects for which are fairly numerous, it will often be found necessary to have more than one salesman stationed in large cities. The city may then be districted or it may be found advantageous to apportion certain classes of prospects to each salesman irrespective of the prospect's location in the city.

15. *Minimum business and guaranteed territory.*—It is well to determine the minimum volume of busi-

ness that should be expected from a certain territory and to insist that the salesman in it should produce that amount of business or relinquish the territory for one less desirable. This estimate will be based to some extent upon the past performances and the ability of the salesman but principally upon the possibilities of the territory.

It is common for houses to guarantee territory. That is, a salesman will be paid a commission or given credit for business coming from his territory even tho he may not have directly influenced the particular sale. Sometimes full commission or credit is given, but more often a salesman receives only a percentage of that to which he would have been entitled had he taken the business personally. Usually a salesman is started with a concern without a guaranteed territory and this is granted to him later as a reward for increased business or length of service.

REVIEW

Outline the several plans of compensating salesmen and point out the advantages and disadvantages of each.

What may a plan of compensation be expected to do?

Discuss the importance of making provisions for promotion of salesmen.

Discuss the blocking out of territory; the routing of a salesman thru his territory; the considerations in readjusting territory.

How may city territory be handled?

CHAPTER VI

SALES RECORDS

1. *Sales records and statistics.*—With no attempt to give a detailed description of any of the various systems of records in use in the sales departments of business houses thruout the country, it is important to indicate the nature of the information that a sales manager should have constantly before him or at least quickly available. It should not be understood that all of the records and statistics enumerated are necessary in every case, since it is unnecessary to spend money making records of things easily remembered. Records necessary to keep in constant touch with a sales force of one hundred would be in great part unnecessary in handling a force of ten. The records needed depend further upon the nature of the business. It must be left to the reader to decide the particular kind of information that he should have available in his business. As a general rule, the house which sells a large number of items will require more detailed information and a greater variety of statistics than that which handles but one product.

Sales department records and statistics are compiled from orders received, from special analyses of field conditions and from reports sent in by the sales-

men. In this connection it should be constantly borne in mind that the salesman should not be loaded up with too large an amount of purely clerical work. The salesman is easily disgusted and discouraged when he has to spend a considerable portion of his evenings in filling out different reports. The temperament that makes a man sell goods most readily, is usually not one that makes him take kindly to the careful detail work necessary in making out reports. In making such reports the salesman is likely to expend more energy for a given result than would one who liked careful detailed work. It is well to remember that the salesman has just so much energy to expend and to allow him to devote practically all of it to pure selling work.

Salesmen working on a commission will act as a safety valve on the sales manager who expects too much report work; but even where the salesmen are working on straight salaries, the sales manager would do well to determine just what proportion of the energy which he purchases to use in the selling of goods, should be employed in other channels. If the reports required of salesmen in the field are too detailed or too numerous it sometimes happens that the salesman who turns in the greatest volume of business is the most careless about his reports, and that the man who turns in the best reports does the least business. The sales manager will then be forced to decide whether it is business or reports that he most desires from the men in the field. Nevertheless, there are certain re-

ports that only the salesmen in the field can furnish. His diligence in so doing should be as greatly appreciated and as adequately rewarded as his ability to get business.

2. *Records of work in territory.*—The practice of making permanent records of the work done by the salesmen in the several territories varies with different concerns and in different lines of business. In some cases very complete information is desired, and a card is written for each prospect in the territory. Duplicate cards are then forwarded to the salesman a short time before he calls upon the prospects. The salesman, after he has made his call, reports the result of the interview on the card. A certain limit for the returning of these reports may be set and a tickler system installed to see that reports are made. The salesman calling upon new prospects of his own initiative may report on blank cards furnished for that purpose. These are the general outlines on one of many systems that may be provided to keep track of the thoroness with which territory is worked. Thoro records of this nature when they are not too expensive will do much to point out opportunities for increased business.

3. *Robert H. Ingersoll and Brother territorial records.*—Probably the most complete record of this sort —especially considering that the product sold is low in price, and the number of possible customers particularly large—is that recently installed by Robert H. Ingersoll and Brother, marketers of the well-known Ingersoll watches. This house is credited with

having established an almost perfect distribution of its product in spite of keen competition and price cutting.

From all available sources—trade lists, general and special directories, listing companies, and the like—the names of all dealers who might handle the Ingersoll line have been procured. The labor of doing this work so as to cover the entire country will be appreciated when it is pointed out that the Ingersoll line is handled not only by jewelers but by stationers, druggists, hardware dealers and numerous specialty shops, to say nothing of post-card and novelty shops and souvenir stores in various localities.

These names are carded in duplicate on a specially designed form and filed geographically according to states, cities being filed alphabetically behind each state and individual dealers alphabetically behind each city. Several days before a salesman is expected to visit a town, the original cards on that town are taken out of the file and sent to him, the guide card containing the name of the town being signalled at the same time and an entry made upon it, showing to whom the original cards were sent and the date of shipment. The duplicate cards which are left in file act as a tickler on individual cards.

These records are of course incomplete and often incorrect. No matter how thoroly any number of lists may be combed, an actual survey of a town is almost certain to reveal dealers in various lines who can handle the Ingersoll line to advantage, but whose

names have not been obtained from any of the sources used. The salesman is required to make out a card for these and report upon them in the same manner as upon the dealers whose names are furnished by the house. On the other hand, many who from the lists and directories would seem to be logical dealers in the line, will, upon inspection, be found unavailable for one reason or another. The first thing that a salesman checks on the card, therefore, is the question of whether or not the dealer is available as a handler of Ingersoll watches.

The variety of detailed information which the company expects eventually to have instantly available on every individual prospect is indicated by some of the questions the salesman is required to answer and for which spaces are provided on the form. He must decide and indicate, for example, whether each dealer is "essential" or "non-essential." The Ingersoll Company classes as essential, those dealers who, because of the size of their trade, their commanding locations, or their progressive methods, should carry the line if distribution is to be complete. In every town, there is a stationer, a druggist or a hardware merchant—and in some cases there are all three—who commands the best or largest trade in his line. In larger cities, where there are several large business centers, there are sure to be one or more dealers in each center who occupy a commanding position in their trade. In many cases, there will be dealers who without doing a

large business are important in their communities because of progressive advertising and merchandising methods. These will indicate the classes of possible dealers which the Ingersoll Company considers as "essential." In making this classification it is not the idea of the company to secure the essential dealers and to neglect the others. But the smaller and so-called "non-essential" dealers will be more easily procured as handlers of the line after the essential dealers have been secured. Furthermore, the company takes this classification into consideration in its distribution of advertising cuts, indoor and outdoor display signs and counter display fixtures.

Spaces are provided on the record card in which the salesman may check the merchant's evident care of his windows and the frequency with which he dresses them; the amount, nature and effectiveness of any advertising the merchant may do; his general progressiveness and merchandising ability as indicated by these things and by his methods of keeping, caring for and displaying his stock—not only his watch stock, but all other lines as well; and his rate of turnover both of the Ingersoll line and his entire line as well. This information is used by the company's service department in keeping in touch with the dealer and suggesting to him ways and means of increasing the volume of his sales. Here again it is the policy of the company not to confine advice to the turning over of Ingersoll products, but to extend it to everything

that the merchant carries, as the company relies upon the general improvement in his merchandising to have a beneficial effect on the Ingersoll watch sales.

Furthermore, the salesman is asked to indicate whether the dealer has been carrying the Ingersoll line in the past, whether or not he carries a competing line and to note the approximate sales of each. Spaces are also provided on the back of the card for a record of each order that the salesman secures and turns in.

The first reports have not as yet been received from all parts of the country by the Ingersoll Company, but eventually the information indicated, and much more, will be available on every merchant in the country handling the Ingersoll lines, and will be kept up to date by subsequent visits of the salesmen. The salesman will know before he calls upon a man, just what sort of a merchant he is, whether or not he handles a competing line, whether or not he has been buying the Ingersoll line and if so, at what intervals, and in what quantities; in short, both the salesman and the house have a fairly good basis for judgment. All information indicated on the card sent in by the salesman is transferred to the office duplicate after each visit so that even tho the original be in the salesman's hands or lost, the house has available at all times a complete record.

With the aid of the Hollerith Tabulating Machine, various tabulations are made from these records and from the actual orders turned in, as to the sale of each grade of watch in each finish; of sales by cities, coun-

ties and states; of the volume of sales all over the country in towns of a given size; and of the size of the average order, in different localities, in different lines of business, and in different sized towns.

4. *Salesman's daily report.*—The salesman should be required to report daily the names of the prospects or customers upon whom he has called and the results of each interview. This report shows his day's work and reflects the conditions of trade in the territory. In every case where no sale has been made, a definite reason should be given. The salesman should not be required to report on the same prospects on two different forms if that can be avoided. For example, if he reports the results of an interview on a prospect card furnished by the house, he should not be required to give the same information a second time on another blank. This should be considered in determining the form of daily report. When two records are necessary it will be found cheaper to employ clerical help to make the second one in the office.

5. *Salesman's daily letter.*—While the daily letter which the salesman writes to the sales manager may not be a record in some of the senses of the word, it is the most important single thing that the salesman sends in to the sales manager. The salesman should be encouraged to write long, intimate letters. Without them, the sales manager cannot keep in the closest possible touch with the salesman's work nor be of the greatest possible help to him. The regularity with which salesmen write such letters to their sales man-

ager—or, in some cases, the frequency with which they neglect to do so—will go a great way toward indicating the frame of mind of the individual and the spirit of the organization.

6. *Tabulations of sales.*—The sales manager should have constantly before him in some graphic, instantly readable form a tabulation of each individual's daily sales for the current month and monthly sales for the current year. Similar records for previous years should also be instantly available. Where the line is varied, the tabulation should show the volume of sales by items or classes of goods. Similar records for the organization as a whole should also be available. The totals on the daily individual record will frequently be the basis for computing the latter. In connection with the individual record, the salesman's percentage of quota, when one has been assigned, or his standing in any contest that may be running should be indicated. These records can be used by the sales manager or his assistants in writing to the salesmen daily letters that will be stimulating and helpful.

If there are branch offices, reports should be required from them daily. It may be that the individual salesman will be handled by the branch manager, in which case much of the detailed information required will be reported to the branch offices. Many sales managers who are establishing selling offices, however, find that it is best to keep in touch with each individual salesman directly from the home office and

in such cases keep full detailed information at headquarters and write to each salesman daily.

7. *Salesman's route card.*—If the salesman is moving rapidly from place to place and his route has not been settled definitely before the start of the trip, the sales manager should be kept in constant touch with his movements by means of daily or weekly route cards showing the towns in which he will be on certain dates and the hotels at which he may be reached. It has been found advantageous to have this card of a size convenient for filing.

8. *Reports on customers.*—It may be found advisable to have the salesman report on each individual customer upon whom he calls, either as a supplement to or a substitute for his daily report. In the selling of a varied line, for example, the sales manager will want to know in regard to each class of goods whether the customer still has a large proportion of the previous order on his shelves, whether he has been sold on the trip or is a future prospect; whether he has been stocked by a competitor, and if so, when he will again be in the market.

In other cases, it may be found necessary to have the salesman supplement the work of the credit department by reporting on the financial standing of the customer, the class of his trade and the general condition of his store and stock. The report on the individual customer will be found a valuable record for the service department both in acknowledging the

initial order and in writing subsequent letters. Correspondents with this information can write letters on specific topics which affect the customer's individual interests and avoid generalities. The customer's report will also enable the house to give the salesman at any future time specific information as to previous purchases.

9. *Maps.*—A nest of maps—a cabinet consisting of shallow drawers in which the maps are pasted—is essential. In the case of the house selling a product nationally, maps of each state should be provided. When a concern covers a more limited territory, there should be provided maps of the individual counties contained in the area in which the company operates. On these maps, the territories of the individual salesman should be indicated by being outlined either with tacks and a string or with colored crayon. The city in which the salesman has his headquarters may be indicated by suitable marking. Branch offices, dealers or agencies may be indicated. The salesman's progress on a trip thru his territory may be shown by driving a tack in each town visited and stringing a colored cord from one to the other. A further refinement is to show various trips during the year in different colored cords.

When the information noted on the map changes infrequently, the use of colored crayon will be found much simpler and more satisfactory than the use of tacks and string. The latter are always likely to become disarranged. Even in cases where the informa-

tion recorded changes rapidly it is an easy matter to use colored crayons and have the marked-up maps replaced frequently with fresh ones.

10. *Monthly tabulations of sales.*—The sales manager should have tabulated a monthly record of the number of sales, the volume of sales, the classes of goods sold, and if practicable, the terms on which sales were made. Such a record enables him to see at a glance which goods are moving rapidly, to devise plans for the pushing of goods showing a larger profit, to forecast the future volume of rates in each line, and to compare results with those of previous periods.

11. *Other possible information.*—The statistical records that may be compiled from the information available will vary with different lines of business. They should be sufficient to enable the sales manager to make all necessary comparisons. It may be found advantageous to have charts showing the relations of sales to prospects; the relation of cost to sales; and relations of sales in one section to those in another. The sales manager may find it advantageous to subscribe to one of the reporting services which make a business of furnishing information on which to base judgment of business conditions and selling opportunities in various parts of the country.

Too many records, however, are almost as confusing as too few. All cost money. It should be borne in mind constantly that sales records and statistics have two general purposes: first, to enable the sales manager to gauge the business that the organization

should secure, and to see what percentage of this it is securing, so that he may put his finger on the weak spots; to show him what classes of goods sell best and why, and to indicate the producing ability of each salesman; and, secondly, to furnish the salesman with the greatest possible measure of assistance and co-operation in the field.

REVIEW

What sales records and statistics are necessary—in general? In your business?

Give the essentials of the Ingersoll territorial records.

Discuss the salesman's daily reports; reports on customers; daily letters; route cards.

Discuss tabulations of sales.

CHAPTER VII

COOPERATION WITH SALESMEN

1. *Biggest thing in sales management.*—To get the best out of the men in the field is the sales manager's real task, the end of all sales management. Some sales managers claim that this is the only thing they should be called upon to do, and some houses insist that the energies of their sales managers be directed to this end to the exclusion of all other duties. Assuming that the sales manager is a broad-gauge, all-round business man and that his authority and activities have the wide scope indicated in previous chapters, this is sound doctrine. The sales manager should be careful to delegate to others all routine work and as much detail as is practicable, so that he shall have time, thought and energy to devote to his most important object of getting the best out of every individual member of his organization.

2. *"Ginger" versus cooperation.*—A sales manager once sent out to each of his men a letter reading in part as follows: "Why did you fall down in making the sale? For your own benefit and ours, write me frankly." He was rather startled to receive from one of his men this reply: "Because I did not know my goods. You have been filling us so full of 'ginger'

and 'boost' that we have not had a chance to learn anything about the goods."

There would seem to be two distinct classes of sales managers, one with the pure "ginger" idea of stirring the men up to get the most from them; and the other with the broader view of giving the men an opportunity to know their goods, of helping them over the rough spots, and of aiding them to build up their characters and capacities and to realize their ambitions.

Salesman do not take as kindly to being "gingered" continually as some sales managers fondly imagine. Salesmen, as well as all other men, like a game and enjoy the introduction of the game spirit into their work, but it must be realized that they are capable, intelligent and ambitious men. They demand that a large amount of common sense be mixed with the game if it is to be successful. From the sales manager's point of view, pure "ginger" methods are inefficient, because the enthusiasm they generate is not lasting. The "ginger" idea has a place in sales management only when it has back of it a profound love for the men of the organization, a keen realization of their problem and difficulties, and a sincere desire to give them real cooperation.

With these considerations in mind, let us consider the various tested methods of getting the best from the members of the selling organization.

3. *Visiting the men in the field.*—When the salesmen get into the house but once or twice a year, or have headquarters in their territories and see the home

office only when a convention is held, the sales manager will do well to arrange one or two trips annually during which he will visit and possibly work with each member of his organization. Those whom he cannot see should be visited by his principal assistant. When the sales manager and his assistant can each make two trips a year, those visited by the assistant on the first trip should be visited by the sales manager on the second, and vice versa. There is nothing that will put the sales manager closer to his men, and secure a greater measure of their loyalty and enthusiastic support, than to sit down with them in their own headquarters, discuss territory conditions, and get acquainted with their wives and families.

In the case of a general sales manager having control of a number of district offices, he will confine his visits to the district managers, but the district manager should, in turn, keep in touch with the individual men.

A variation of this plan of visits in the field is the calling of individual men to the home office for conference regarding their work and the conditions in their territorities.

4. *Daily letters.*—The salesman is apt to be sensitive and highly strung. If he were not, he would be but an indifferent salesman. Each rebuff, each discouragement, each discourtesy is likely to take just a little of the edge from his enthusiasm. This enthusiasm must be renewed from some source and, with few exceptions, salesmen will not find the source within

themselves. The only source then is contact with the men from the home office. For this reason alone the sales manager, or in the case of a large force his principal assistant, should write every day to each individual member of the organization a stimulating, friendly letter. So important are such letters that nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of getting them out. Great care should be taken to mail the letter to the proper town; a salesman who is looking forward to an inspiring message from his sales manager will not be one hundred per cent efficient if this message fails to arrive. Furthermore, when two or three letters reach a man at the same time they will not generate the same amount of enthusiasm as when the same letters reach him on separate days.

In this connection, it should be remembered that a holiday when no letters are written from the home office will cause the salesman to be without his daily letter on a later working day. To take care of this, it may be well to get out a double amount of letters on the day preceding and delegate some member of the office force to mail them on the holiday. In lieu of this, the sales manager may get out a post card containing some timely message in multigraphed form or send to each man in the organization an ordinary picture post card on which he has written some personal message. The latter course can profitably be followed, also, when the sales manager or his assistant is out on the road. In the latter case, the salesman

will receive the personal card in addition to his usual daily letter from the office.

5. *Contents of daily letter.*—In these letters the salesmen should be thanked sincerely for the orders received from them that day or for contributions to the house organ. They should be complimented upon any good work they may have been doing and should receive sound advice from the sales manager on any deals that may be before them. The message will, in general, be based upon the letter received that morning from the salesman.

As far as it is possible, criticisms should be kept out of these letters. When it is absolutely necessary, it should be given in a manner which will increase rather than decrease the salesman's efficiency. A salesman who has been doing his best, but who for some reason has not been producing normal results, needs friendly encouragement and sound suggestions rather than criticisms. Nothing will so effectively destroy the producing power of a loyal salesman as a sharp, fault-finding letter from the sales manager. If the salesman has been derelict and it is necessary for the sake of discipline that he be reprimanded, the language in which the reprimand is couched should be given careful consideration. There is no phase of the sales manager's duty in which he is called upon to exercise more tact and real executive ability than in his letters to his men. His one purpose is to increase sales, and he should have in mind the effect which each letter is likely to have upon the productiveness of the salesman.

6. *Special paragraphs.*—There should be included in this daily letter some one inspiring thought, helpful suggestion or piece of news. This part of the letter will be applicable to all men in the organization and will therefore be written each morning in the form of special paragraphs, to be typed either preceding or following the purely personal dictation. No attempt is made to hide from the salesman the fact that such paragraphs are included in the letters to the other men in the organization. They are, however, worded so that it is sometimes difficult for the salesman to determine just where the personal dictation leaves off and the special paragraphs begin. If no letter has been received from the salesman or if there is nothing of importance to communicate to him that day, the special paragraphs may be sent unaccompanied by personal dictation.

This form paragraph may convey some information regarding changes of house policies or prices, some piece of good news concerning the house or some purely inspirational thought or suggestion as to a new method of selling which the salesman may carry into the field with him that day. Much depends upon the nature of the business; much depends also upon the type of sales manager and salesmen. The following represent the more inspirational type of paragraph:

7. *Special paragraphs illustrated.*—

ON CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

How many of your prospects do you lose because you give them up too easily? Every salesman loses business by be-

coming too easily discouraged. Oftentimes a prospect will tell you "no" when he really does not mean it. He is waiting for some further reason, advanced by you, in order to satisfy himself thoroly that he should take up our proposition.

As long as there is a flicker of interest in your prospect you have no right to leave him. Be persistent, but at the same time diplomatic. Come back at him from another angle and hammer along those lines that you know are of greatest interest to your prospect. You leave lots of men who are almost persuaded; a little more thought on your part, a little more persistency, and a little more diplomacy will close many an order that otherwise is lost.

Work up a fighting spirit—that "never-say-die" spirit will carry you thru and turn your failures into successes.

ON QUOTAS

There are eight more days in February and so far you have fallen short of the quota that I had hoped you would reach. Won't you put forth an extra effort for the remaining few days of the month so that your own earnings will be somewhere near what you should be making?

I realize the difficulties that you are up against in the field; I have been thru the mill myself; but whenever business did not come for me in satisfactory quantities, I always made a self-analysis, and ninety-nine times out of a hundred I found that I was to blame. Some days I felt tired; business suffered. Other days I saw the people and mechanically told them my message; still business suffered. Usually when Thursday came I would awaken to the fact that I needed the business and the money that the business brought me; then I would get out and work along the right lines—and I always made sales.

You are not differently constituted from any other salesman, and if you will stop for a few minutes to make a self-analysis, you will come to the conclusion, just as I used to, that you are really to blame. There is some reason for your getting business one week and falling down the next. The

prospects are practically the same. The product you are selling is better as each week follows, and it always resolves itself into this: Concentrated effort systematically put forward, plus enthusiasm, will always bring results.

I am not writing this letter in the form of a criticism, but, if there is one suggestion in it that will set you thinking, I have done my duty by you and by the company. Get busy for the next eight days and send in enough business to make February a profitable month both to yourself and to the house.

8. *Paragraphs used for training.*—Many sales managers wish to keep their men constantly in training in the principles of salesmanship and in the best methods of selling the individual line. A salesman may fail to return answer papers to formal courses of selling instruction when these are given; he may neglect to read a course of instruction published in the house organ; but there is not a salesman in any organization who will fail to read his daily letter thru with care and absorb any suggestions as to better selling methods contained in it. The special paragraphs, then, may frequently be devoted to suggestions as to better selling methods.

9. *Mottoes and indorsements.*—It is the practice of one very successful sales manager to include with his daily letter some sort of inspirational motto or quotation on a card of convenient size. Another manager incloses every day a copy of some letter of indorsement of the goods written by a customer.

10. *House organs.*—The term house organ as used here is not intended to include publications put out

by different houses for circulation among their customers, dealers or prospects, but only those more intimate personal and confidential publications, the sole purpose of which is to keep the salesman—and possibly other members of the organization—in close touch with one another and with the house.

These house organs are of two general styles: the newspaper type and the magazine type. Some are put out in the general form of newspapers and the articles are written in newspaper style with newsy headings and sub-heads, while others partake more of the nature of a magazine both in form and contents.

Some are published weekly and others monthly, while a few large organizations publish theirs daily. For the majority of organizations, the weekly house organ will be found most practicable and most effective.

11. *Mechanical make-up of house organ.*—In the mechanical make-up, a considerable difference prevails among concerns. Many house organs are printed more or less elaborately, a number of them carrying artistic three-colored covers and being profusely illustrated with half-tone cuts. Others are prepared in the firm's office by means of some duplicating device and the occasional illustrations run are printed outside as inserts. For the concern whose house organ will have a limited circulation—which will go to an organization of, let us say, from twenty-five to one hundred men—the latter is the much less costly method and will be found quite as effective.

The mechanical make-up is after all much less important than the nature of the contents.

12. *Name and contents.*—Probably the most important thing to be kept in mind in selecting a name for the house organ is to choose one which suggests not the "ginger" idea so much as information and cooperation.

Altho much depends upon the nature of the particular business, the size of the publication, the number within the organization and the intimacy and good fellowship existing among them, in general the house organ will contain the standings in any sales contest that may be under way, contributions from the men in the field, personal notices concerning the members of the sales organization, important announcements regarding advertising, house policies, new contests, quota prizes, conventions and the like, articles on selling and on sales methods, and articles which are purely inspirational in nature.

The house organ may be used as a vehicle for a formal study course in salesmanship.

A series of articles following the concern's product right thru from the raw material to the finished article and designed to give the members of the selling organization a minute and detailed knowledge of their goods, especially with a view to their using it in the selling talk, should be given a place. The proceedings of the annual sales convention or speeches made to the training classes may be run serially. The cooperative idea can be fostered by encouraging the

heads of other departments to contribute articles that will help the salesmen and that will secure cooperation from them. It is usually well to bind the house and field organizations together by devoting a page or two to inside organization matters, both of a business and a social nature.

Care should be taken that the contents of the house organ be not confined too strictly to business. Notices of the little joys and sorrows that enter into the home lives of the different members of the organization should be given place, so that their comrades may rejoice with them in their happiness, or feel with them in their sorrows. A little good-natured chaffing on their foibles, breezy little stories of humorous situations in which they have played a part and references to such matters as a fishing trip, the purchase of an automobile or a new house, will help the salesmen to feel that they know one another well, will give them something to talk about when they meet at convention and do much to create and maintain the "large happy family" spirit. Within this scope, however, everything included should be relevant. The house organ built up too liberally from other publications with the aid of the shears and the paste pot, does little to weld the organization. Material of this sort should be used sparingly and only when it is especially appropriate. Furthermore, anything pessimistic in nature or carrying negative suggestions of any sort has no place in the house organ.

While the star producers of the organization should

be given due recognition in the house organ, and while playing them up in the right way will inspire the other men, care should be taken not to over-feature them, nor to feature them to the exclusion of the rank and file. Every member of the sales organization should have a place in the house organ in one way or another with equal frequency. It is more important to make the mediocre producer feel that he is an integral part of the organization and so encourage him to live up to the responsibilities which this entails, than it is to give prominence to the star.

Neither is the house organ the place for preaching from the company officials, nor for "talking down" of any sort from any source. The house organ should carry an all-one-plane spirit, and all writing should be red-blooded, man-to-man style. The faults of the sales organization, which it may be desired to correct, should seldom, if ever, be attacked directly. The pertinent story, preferably humorous or semi-humorous, is the better way.

13. *House organ illustrations.*—While illustrations run up the cost of the house organ slightly, they add greatly to its interest. The sales manager will want to get out one or more special issues during the year —the convention number, for example, to be distributed at the home office when the men come in for convention—and these should be profusely illustrated. Sometimes they will carry half tones of each of the officials and department heads of the inside organization and of each member of the selling force, accom-

panied by a short biography or "grind" similar to those found in college annuals.

In other issues, pictures, usually snapshots, sent in by the men in the field may be used especially if they feature the salesman's family or his home surroundings. Pictures of representatives in foreign parts or traveling by unusual methods will be interesting. If the home organization holds an outing of any sort, the men in the field will be pleased with photographs showing the various events and pleasures of the day. Any additions to the plant or office should be visualized by pictures for the field men. All of these will require the making of half-tone cuts and, if the house organ is printed in the office, will necessitate the printing of special pages outside. These pages will have to be of a paper that will take a half-tone cut.

Then there are the little thumb-nail sketches, illustrating certain articles, and the black and white cartoons, preferably drawn by a member of the organization, of which simple line cuts can be made. Everyone should be encouraged to send in photographs and to submit pen and ink drawings.

14. *Object of the house organ.*—Some of the objects of the house organ have been indicated in the previous paragraphs. In general, the house organ should keep the whole organization, both outside and inside, bound closely together, should keep the salesmen informed as to one another, should keep them posted as to house news, as to their goods and as to trade possibilities, should stimulate them to continued

loyalty and enthusiasm and, with all this, should strike a sincere note of helpfulness and cooperation.

15. *Securing contributions to the house organ.*—To secure contributions from the members of the inside organization will usually be a simple matter. The sales manager decides what sort of articles he wants, picks those whom he desires to write them, and keeps diplomatically after the proposed authors until he secures their contributions. Requests from other department heads that the sales manager give his men certain instructions regarding cooperation with these departments give an opportunity to suggest that these department heads write an article on the subject for the house organ. By continued insistence upon a fraternizing tone in such articles the sales manager will be able to avoid any critical or dictatorial attitude that might antagonize the men in the field.

The absence of contributions from the salesmen themselves is noticeable in most house organs. In the measure that this is so, the effectiveness of the house organ will be impaired. The absence of salesmen's contributions is too often due to the fact that the editor expects long, special articles from the men and, that when he is fortunate enough to get them, he applies the editorial blue pencil so extensively as to irritate and discourage the writers.

16. *Getting salesmen to contribute.*—A method of securing salesmen's articles frequently used is to offer prizes. The subject on which the articles submitted

are to be written may be named by the editor or the salesmen may be left to select their own subjects. Some house organ editors, recognizing that most salesmen are averse to writing formal articles require from them only rough outlines of their ideas. The editor then fills in the outline, writes the article in his own words and gives the salesman credit for it.

By far the best way to secure house organ contributions from salesmen is to cull them from the letters the men write to the sales manager. Under the daily letter system described, the salesman will be encouraged to write long, interesting and chummy letters. Enthusiastic portions of these, sometimes including references to orders sent in or descriptions of how orders were taken, may be selected and run in the house organ under special heads written for each one individually, or under such a general head as "FROM THE MEN ON THE FIRING LINE."

When a man has put over an especially good deal, a request from the sales manager to write a letter telling how it was done will bring an enthusiastic, unstudied story that will make fine reading in the house organ. That the salesman suspects it will be used in the house organ will make little difference. The fact that he is telling his story in a letter addressed to the sales manager makes it easy for him. If a salesman shows unusual success with a particular class of prospects, he should be requested to write the sales manager a description of the methods he uses in getting

that class of business. Unless there is some good reason to the contrary, the salesman's name should always be signed to the contributions thus secured.

17. *The house organ editor.*—The editor of the house organ and the sales manager have been spoken of here as if they were two different persons. Except in rare instances, however, the sales manager should edit the house organ. Only by so doing can he be sure that the right articles find their way to its pages. Articles which may be all right from other points of view are not always advantageous from a sales standpoint. An article the subject matter of which may be acceptable, may be written in a tone that would antagonize the whole sales force. Many house organs are filled with irrelevant material because the editors, lacking the sales point of view, are unable to fill their pages with proper material. When the sales manager edits the house organ the contents will be right from a selling standpoint and helpful to the men in the field.

REVIEW

What is the biggest thing in sales management?

Discuss the following as a means to getting the best out of the men in the field: sales manager's visits to men; his daily letters to them; training methods; house organ.

Discuss in detail the sales manager's letters to his men.

Discuss the house organ. Cover the following points: form; mechanical make-up; contents; editor; contributions; frequency of publication; tone.

CHAPTER VIII

SALES CONTESTS

1. *Contests.*—The love of a game is inbred in all of us, and in a closely knit, harmonious selling organization anything that makes a game out of business and enables its members to indulge in friendly rivalry is welcome. The sales contest does this, and at the same time sets a standard for the salesman to attain, and thus promotes his selling efficiency.

Contests may be announced at the opening of a year, at the annual convention for example, and may run thruout the entire year. Others may be for monthly or quarterly periods and may be announced in the house organ. A contest extending over the months of June, July and August may be planned to keep the members of the selling organization working at maximum efficiency during these ordinarily off months. One big concern doing a national business fought off "dull times" talk in the early part of 1914 by announcing that the board of directors had come to the conclusion that the time was ripe for rapid expansion of the company's business, and by inaugurating a series of contests for prizes to be awarded in accordance with percentages of increase over corresponding months of previous years.

It will be found that the annual contest is good for a long pull and may be likened to a distance foot race. The shorter term contests or quota races will correspond to the sprints. They will inspire bursts of speed, as do the special short distance prizes offered to the riders in a six-day bicycle race.

2. *Giving all a chance to win.*—It is a fundamental principle of sales contest planning, that each man in the organization be given more than a fighting chance to win. The rules should be such that every salesman in the organization, irrespective of the volume of his production, will start out optimistic in regard to coming out at the top. A contest under whose rules only a few top-notch producers in the organization can compete attracts little attention and creates no enthusiasm among the rank and file of the organization. Such a contest will be no incentive to them to increase their sales.

Calculating standing in the contest according to the percentage of increase over a previous period is a method which gives every salesman a chance to win. It has the disadvantage, however, of allowing the poorest producer of a previous period the best chance of winning. This in turn may be guarded against to some degree by establishing a minimum upon which increases will be calculated. In order that the top-notch producers of a previous period may have an opportunity of winning a prize also, there should be one or two prizes for total sales in addition to the prizes based on increases.

The principle here is the same as that which governs handicapping in athletic events. Just as a crack runner, unless handicapped, would win easily without putting forth his best efforts, so the big producer in a selling organization, if he is not handicapped, will carry off the honors without a struggle. The men may be handicapped by assigning quotas, and determining standing in the contest by the percentage of quota which has been attained. It will thus be possible for salesmen whose respective volumes of business vary widely to have the same percentages of quota and consequently identical standings in the contest. The contest standing may be figured on a point basis. In this case a certain amount in sales constitutes one point, and this amount may vary for different men or different territories. Consistent effort is sometimes recognized by rewarding those who take orders on the largest number of days, irrespective of the total of orders taken.

3. *Making quality of business count.*—The quality as well as the quantity of business taken should enter into the figuring of standings in the contest. Different totals of sales of different articles may be made to represent a point if the contest is figured on a point basis. One point may be allowed for every five dollars in sales of an article which shows the larger profit, or which it is desired to push, while a sale of ten dollars or even fifteen dollars will be necessary to earn a point in another class of goods. Articles may be weighted by assigning them various numbers indicating their

importance. Then the points allowed on each class of goods will be multiplied by the weight numbers, the results added, and the total divided by the total of the weight numbers.

Separate points may be allowed for the terms secured on orders. For example, fifteen additional points might be allowed for every $100 in business taken for cash in ten days, ten points for every $100 in business due in thirty days, and five points for every $100 due in sixty days. If the business is such that collections are made with the order, an additional tenth of a point may be allowed for each dollar collected and sent in with the order. The methods of figuring contest standings so that every member of the organization will have an equal chance, and so that quality as well as quantity of business will be taken into consideration, will vary in different lines.

4. *Prizes.*—Salesmen will generally respond much more readily and much more enthusiastically to an appeal to their pride and their desire to win a place of honor than they will to an appeal to their pocketbooks. They will strive hard for a prize the value of which put up in money would leave them unmoved. As a general rule, unless money prizes are valuable enough to appeal sufficiently to a salesman on a strictly cash basis, contest prizes should not be money and should preferably be of a nature to allow of a suitable inscription indicating that they are prizes. Successful contests have been waged for mere pieces of paper, cloth pennants, inexpensive buttons, the honor of see-

ing one's picture in the house organ, or for a cup or a banner to be displayed in the district office or in the salesman's home.

Furthermore, the salesman will respond to an appeal to help others quite as readily as he will to an appeal to increase his own earnings or win a prize for himself. Some concerns, for example, set aside different months in the year during which the business taken will be considered a tribute to different executives of the company. Salesmen will forge ahead and pile up a big business for a well-liked man altho they get nothing from it themselves other than the satisfaction of having contributed to a big month in his honor. An appeal to make a record month during the absence of the sales manager so as to surprise him on his return, if not overdone, will bring a ready response. The board of directors of one large concern set the business they expected to secure in a certain year as the sales manager's quota and offered to present him with an automobile if his organization were successful in producing that amount. In this contest, the score-makers got nothing but the glory of having contributed a certain number of parts toward the sales manager's automobile.

5. *Plans of contests.*—There is such a wide variety of contests that no comprehensive list could be given here. A few that have been successful and that have had a strong imaginative appeal may be mentioned, however.

6. *One hundred point club.*—One large organiza-

tion has what is known as a "One hundred point club." Only those who average one hundred points per month in sales for an entire year are eligible to membership the following year. In this case, one point represents twenty-five dollars in sales. The first man to reach twelve hundred points is president of the club for the following year, the second man vice-president, and so on. In addition to the honor which membership confers, all members of the club are brought to headquarters for a short sojourn. The membership of the club is, of course, widely advertised thru the house organ and in other ways.

7. *The baseball idea.*—Advantage may be taken of timely events in the staging of the contest. Much ingenuity has been shown in the planning of baseball contests during the summer by pitting district offices of equal strength from different sections of the country against one another; and where the organization is large enough leagues have even been formed. In one case, a bogie team was pitted against the players of the organization. Orders according to their size are made to represent one-base hits, two-baggers and home runs.

In one baseball contest where conditions made it necessary to include a different number of men in each team, the team quotas were figured by assigning individual quotas to each team member, and using the total as team quotas. Then the "standing of the clubs" was figured by determining the percentage of the quota actually secured at any given date and run-

ning that as the team's "percentage." The only prize in this baseball contest was a pennant to be awarded the team having the highest percentage and to be presented to that team at the next annual convention. "Batting averages" of individual team members were to be shown.

In announcing the plans for this "league" nothing was said about team captains. It was not long, however, before several men on one team conceived the idea of honoring one of their number with the captaincy. Other teams quickly followed suit without suggestions from the home office. Naturally the captain, once elected, was looked to by the home office to show results with his team. The team members, having elected the captain, felt themselves obliged to answer his requests for extra efforts. Furthermore, each captain was encouraged by the home office to get after the weaker members of his team with the appeal that they were doing an injustice to their hard-working team mates by holding the team down in the percentage column. A man who might think it justifiable to slow down in hot weather so far as the house was concerned, would in all likelihood feel an obligation to his team mates in a contest of this kind, and would respond to an appeal which came not from the house, but from his team mates and team captain.

In another baseball contest, the teams composed of the sales force were considered as playing games the one against the other, a regular schedule being made

out beforehand and each game lasting nine days, each day representing an inning. The score for each inning of the four games always in progress was given by innings each day by special bulletin. Standings of the teams were then figured by the regular "games won and lost" method.

While comparisons are sometimes far-fetched, these baseball contests are generally successful.

8. *Other examples of the athletic idea.*—The football season may be taken advantage of in the same way. Bowling clubs may be organized. One annual contest is known as the yearly marathon, and the money prizes are presented to the winners at the annual convention in individual miniature trophy cups. One successful short-term contest consisted of a handicap automobile race, each twenty-five-dollar sale on credit advancing the salesman's car one yard, and each cash sale of the same amount counting for one and one-half yards, handicaps up to one thousand yards based on past performances being given. Each week that any contestant fell below a certain average, he was credited with having "tire trouble" or "engine trouble" and set back, the lost ground being made up, perhaps, by a higher average week later on. Another concern, selling a single product in three sizes at fifty, seventy-five and one hundred dollars, organized a number of evenly matched rifle teams among its salesmen. Each one-hundred-dollar sale registered a bull's-eye, each seventy-five-dollar sale a first-circle shot, and each fifty-dollar sale a second-circle shot.

Bull's-eyes counted five points each, first-circle shots three points, and second-circle one point each.

9. *Electing a president.*—One concern took advantage of current interest by putting on a contest for the election of a president during a presidential campaign. The simple plan was adopted of allowing each salesman to register one vote for his favorite candidate for each twenty-five dollars' worth of business secured. The contest closed on the last day of October, thereby allowing the organization to express its choice for president a week before the country at large had an opportunity to do so. In a sales organization of women, each $10 in sales was allowed to register a vote for or against suffrage.

10. *An annual contest.*—A large New York organization, while it may have small contests running for short periods during the year, has one contest that runs throughout the entire year. Standings are figured on a point basis, which takes both quantity and quality of business into consideration. The first prize for the greatest number of points is a watch or other article, suitably inscribed, costing not less than $300. The second prize for the second largest number of points is some article costing not less than $150. In addition, there are three prizes for individual increase of business over the previous year; the first to cost not less than $150, the second not less than $100 and the third not less than $50. A minimum of 1,000 points is set as the basis on which increases must be figured, both for those who made less than 1,000 points during

the previous year and for those who are new in the organization. While the prizes for the greatest number of points have been won by the same three or four men in the four years that the contest has been running, the increase prizes have gone to different men each year.

There is a thousand point club in connection with this contest, the first man to secure a thousand points in any year being the president, the second the vice-president, and so on. All salesmen securing one thousand points or more during the calendar year are club members. The names of these "thousand pointers" are each year placed on a suitably inscribed bronze tablet. The concern, a rapidly growing one, does not as yet occupy its own building but expects to in the near future; and at that time, it is planned to line the marble halls of the building with these bronze tablets.

Toward the end of the year there begins to appear in the house organ what is known as the thousand point page, the names of those who have passed the thousand point mark being carried each week in the order in which they achieve this distinction and the names of the new men achieving the goal being added to the ever-lengthening list.

11. *Contests between cities.*—It may be desired to pit part of the organization against another part to the exclusion of other organization members. For example, a concern with salesmen all over the country but with only two city organizations, one in New

York and one in Chicago, inaugurated what was called a "big cities" contest. Two sets of theater tickets, the tickets desired to be chosen by the winners, were offered as prizes. It became the object of each of the city organizations to take both sets of tickets in the same month and, as a result, rivalry became keen. Standings were shown in each of the offices by listing the names of the contestants in the order of their standing, New York men in red and Chicago men in black.

12. *Methods of showing standings.*—The incentive to enter into a contest depends in some degree upon the way in which the standings are announced and, altho the method employed varies widely, a few suggestions will be given here.

The standings in the Marathon race were shown. of course, by runners on a track, just as the standings in the automobile handicap race were shown by automobiles. In both cases the photographed faces of the individual contestants can be inserted in the drawn figures.

In the "big cities" contest just described, records were posted each week in each of the offices, showing the total of last year's business for that district, the total of the last month's business, the total of the last week's business and the totals for corresponding periods of the previous year. This furnished a continual incentive to exceed the last year's figures at all points.

One or two of the concerns running baseball and

football contests even went so far as to get out special pink sporting extras of the house organ to announce the standings. In the case of the sales manager's automobile, the usual number of parts in an automobile was divided into the business that would be necessary to secure it and the quotient was taken as the unit of sales that would provide one part. Then, weekly announcements of the number of parts provided by each of the individual men were made and an automobile gradually being assembled was pictured.

One concern pictures each month in the house organ the leading salesman at the top of a ladder. Another house has both in its home office and in its house organ a dial with three hands, one pointing to the last year's sales record, the second to the mark set for the current year, and the third showing the progress of the current year's sales. Balloons marked with the contestants' names and with the number of points secured may be shown rising each week. A pictured thermometer is often used. One organization which runs contests in its various district offices has in each office a large board on which are drawn a number of thermometers and at the base of each one where the mercury would ordinarily be is a glass globe of red paint. Each individual salesman's standing is shown by extending a red line up the thermometer.

In the conduct of any of these contests, it is a question whether the names of the individual salesmen should be divulged. In a number of cases the names

are withheld and the standings shown by numbers known only to the sales manager and to the individual salesman bearing them. Fanciful names may also be used to designate members, the real names represented being kept secret in the sales office. The idea of this secrecy is to save those in the low places from discouraging humiliation. Other concerns publish the names of the contestants on the ground that this furnishes a strong incentive to strive for a big change in standing between publications.

13. *Quotas.*—Quotas are of two kinds: First, the minimum amount of business that will be expected from a certain territory; and second, the volume of business set by the sales manager for each individual salesman, which will entitle the salesman to the distinction and honor of having attained or beaten his quota for a certain period and which will entitle him to a prize if one has been offered. It is with the latter class that we are concerned here. Competing for prizes under the quota plan differs from the contests previously described in that each man competes, not against his brother salesmen, but against himself and his quota. The contest, no matter how carefully planned, will be discouraging to some in the organization who will decide at the outset that they have no chance to win the prizes. Providing a salesman's quota is properly determined, it is a poor man indeed who will become discouraged and fail to make an effort to attain it.

14. *Method of determining quotas.*—The setting of

the quota is necessarily more or less arbitrary. The sales manager will consider past results in the salesman's territory, present local conditions that might affect sales, and any selling and advertising plan that may have a bearing on the business to be expected during the quota period; but more particularly, he will consider the past performances of the individual salesman and this will have the greatest weight in determining the quota. Special care should be taken not to place the quota too high. It is much less serious to set it too low. It may be set down as a fundamental principle in handling salesmen that a quota should never be given which it is impossible or even difficult for them to reach. The quota set should be such that with good, consistent work, it will be easy of attainment. A quota that the salesman is able to beat, and does beat strengthens him, gives him confidence and puts him in a position to assume a little larger quota the following month. A quota that is beyond the salesman's reach, on the other hand, discourages him and tends to confirm in him the habit of failure. Some sales managers will allow each salesman to set his own quota and will then cut it down, if they think he has placed it too high.

15. *Examples of quota prizes.*—Quota prizes may be offered for periods of a month or longer. Some firms make it a point to set quotas and offer prizes each month; others, while they may set quotas each month, offer prizes only occasionally. Still more keep the quota prize a novelty by setting quotas and

offering prizes intermittently. In order to keep up the July sales a sales manager offered as a prize to each member of the organization who attained a quota, a handsome, perfectly marked snakewood cane. While the stick itself was valuable, the sales manager laid particular stress on a mental picture of the stick winners marching down Broadway in a body when they came to New York for the annual convention in December. Frequent references were made during the month to the "snakewood brigade." What salesman would be unconcerned about being left out of such a triumphant company?

For attaining their quotas for the four months immediately preceding their convention, another house offered each of its salesmen a genuine walrus traveling bag adorned with his initials in gold. The sales manager announced that he wanted to make this quota contest unique in that he wanted to have the pleasure of presenting every single man in the organization with a walrus bag in the convention hall and, with that end in view, had set the quotas particularly low. With few exceptions the salesmen won their bags and, as evidence that the quotas were really set low, several of them attained the required amount of business in little more than half the time. To keep the interest of these men alive, new quotas were set on the attainment of which they were presented with toilet sets to go into the bags. A few months after the convention, new quotas were set and a folding umbrella that could be carried in the walrus bag was offered.

Another house, for the attainment of a quota set for the months of June, July and August, offered as a prize a folding typewriter which the salesman could carry with him in his travels and which would save him a great deal of trouble in making out reports and sending the necessary correspondence.

To prevent any tendency toward a slow start after an annual convention, another sales manager set quotas for the month of January and offered a gold penknife as a prize. After the convention, a class of a dozen men were trained and started out in their territories on January 15th. To insure an early start for these men the sales manager allowed them to compete for the gold knives and gave them nominal quotas. It will be readily appreciated that the pride of these men in winning a quota prize in their first half month's work made them better salesmen.

All the quota prizes previously referred to were suitably inscribed. On the umbrella and cane, the inscription was engraved on the silver mounting. In the case of the typewriter, a special plate was provided. This is a point that may well be borne in mind in connection with quota prizes. The pride of the salesman in possessing and being able to show the various quota prizes of his house is a strong incentive to him to strive for them.

REVIEW

When is a sales contest effective and what are the principles to be observed in planning one? Give illustrations of successful contest methods.

Plan one for your own salesmen.

Discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of short-term and long-term contests.

Describe some effective methods of showing contest standings.

What is your idea as to the advisability of making known the names of the men near the bottom of the list?

CHAPTER IX

SALES CONVENTIONS

1. *Conventions.*—Annual sales conventions are widely used by selling organizations whose members work in widely separated territories and do not come into frequent contact with one another or with the sales manager. Where possible, the entire organization is called together for a three or four days' conference either at the factory, the home office or at some centrally located point. The factory or office is preferable. It is one of the penalties of growth that eventually the selling organization may become so large that it is impossible to get together in one place or, in fact, to have all its members attend any convention.

Some concerns hold a convention of their eastern representatives at New York and, at its close, the principal officers of the company travel to Chicago and meet the western organization. Larger companies have several of their officers hold conventions in various centrally located cities, the salesmen, sales agents and district managers from the surrounding territory being called in. The National Cash Register Company holds a number of such conventions, some of which are presided over by the president and others by the sales manager. Considerable equip-

ment in the way of charts and bulletin boards is carried. The Burroughs Adding Machine Company applies the convention idea by calling its district managers and salesmen into Detroit in groups of between twenty-five and fifty.

The practice in regard to bearing the expense of convention varies. A great many concerns pay all expenses including railroad fares and hotel bills. Others pay railroad fares but expect the men to defray their own hotel expense. Others make the coming of the salesmen to the convention at the company's expense dependent upon the volume of the salesman's business.

2. *Preparations for the convention.*—A convention represents a considerable expenditure of money. If it is to be an investment and not an expense, everything must be done to make the convention accomplish the purpose for which it is intended. It should be played up beforehand in the house organ and in the daily letters to the men. For months before, the salesman should be reminded at intervals that the time for the annual convention is drawing near and that they will want to have a creditable record to boast of when they come in. This should secure a spurt from every man in the organization for the grand wind-up of the year's business. The men in the field may be asked for suggestions as to topics to be discussed during the convention and they should be told something of what will be expected of them in the way of participation.

Competent committees should be appointed to take care of the several phases of the convention. The usual committees will be those on the convention hall, on entertainment, on hotel and food and on the program. The chairman of each of these committees should be an executive officer.

3. *The program.*—The program should be arranged to bring up in the limited time at the disposal of the convention, all the really important problems of the house and the salesmen. All others should be eliminated. Care should be taken to have the presiding officer of the first session of the convention give a strong inspiring talk that will strike the keynote for the entire convention. The chairmen of the subsequent sessions should be company executives who are familiar with the particular matters under discussion, who are strong enough to hold the convention to the program, and sufficiently interesting to keep the sessions livened up. In addition to the man presiding, it is well to choose leaders for the general discussion that will follow the opening address of the presiding officer at each session. These leaders also should be men who will stick to the matter in hand and lead the discussion along profitable lines.

4. *Typical program.*—A typical program for a three days' convention might include a "get together" session on the morning of the first day. This will allow the salesmen to shake hands with one another, to renew acquaintances with members of the inside organization who should be present at this session,

and enable the gathering to settle down for the more serious work to come. On the afternoon of the first day, the sales records of the year just ending might be discussed with the sales manager presiding. Announcements of prize winners and presentation of prizes will be made at this session. Announcements of contests and prizes for the coming year may follow.

The morning of the second day might be given over to a discussion of improvements in the product, and the afternoon session to sales-building plans for the coming year, including methods of handling territory and training new men, plans for the development of new territory, office cooperation and advertising.

The morning of the third day might be devoted to improvements in the presentation and selling talk, and the afternoon to improvements in samples and equipment and to actual selling talks given by star salesmen.

5. *Talks by the salesmen.*—Probably the most important, and certainly the most inspiring thing at the convention will be the talks on various subjects given by individual salesmen. The topic on which each man is to talk should be arranged beforehand. One concern which at one of its conventions had called upon each member of the selling organization without any previous preparation, for a talk of from three to five minutes' duration found that a great many of the men were at a loss for something to say and comparatively little of what was said was really worth while. After the first few had spoken, those who followed spent

their five minutes mainly in indorsing the things that had been said previously. The following year, therefore, this concern followed the plan of announcing to each of the salesmen six weeks in advance, the subject on which he would be expected to talk for five minutes at the convention.

The subjects assigned to some of the men were those on which they were best qualified to talk; those assigned to others were subjects on which the sales manager wanted them to put some deep thought. To some salesmen, for example, were assigned the discussion of appeals to certain classes of prospects. Others were requested to discuss the most effective use of certain samples and equipment. One salesman was asked to outline a strong opening talk, another to discuss effective closing tactics. Still another was asked to talk on how to cover a widely scattered territory. A salesman who had been especially successful handling advertising inquiries was asked to tell how he did it. Still another was asked to give an inspiring talk on the importance of "saving the day," that is, of letting no day go by without securing an order. Several who had each put over some big deal during the year were asked to make that deal the subject of their talk.

These talks were spread over the entire convention, a certain time each day being devoted to hearing some of them. The talks became so intensely interesting that during the convention, one of the salesmen made a motion that the talks be issued in printed form im-

mediately after the convention, so that each salesman might have the opportunity of going over them again. As a stenographic report of the convention was being made, this was a simple matter. The talks were found to be so full of valuable selling suggestions and real selling helps that they were printed and made part of the concern's sales manual.

6. *Securing maximum benefit from the convention.* —Every minute of the time spent in convention is valuable and none of it should be wasted by rambling talks, fruitless discussions or too much emphasis on relatively unimportant matters. This matter lies largely in the hands of the presiding officer. Definite methods for avoiding these things should be devised, however. In the first place, a firm stand should be taken against coming in late to the convention sessions. It should be made plain to the salesman that this is an act of discourtesy toward the presiding officer, the speaker and the other salesmen. The sales manager should insist that men who talk must have something really important to say. Every man who is given the floor should be limited to a certain time determined by the importance of the subject under discussion. The chairman should have a bell to ring when the speaker's time is up. This rather arbitrary method will be softened if the bell is first rung for a high official who has purposely exceeded his time.

No rival conventions of three or four men in the rear of the hall should be allowed, for nothing is more distracting to the speaker or to the other salesmen.

These minor discussions can be broken up courteously and effectively by drawing one of the men thus engaged into the main discussion.

These are all exceedingly difficult matters upon which to insist and still retain the spirit of enthusiasm and good fellowship which must pervade the entire convention if it is to be a success. Too much emphasis on the necessity of being brief will prevent men with ideas from expressing them. Too much leniency in allowing men to ramble on will use up valuable time and weary the other salesmen. The chairmen of the various sessions must be sufficiently diplomatic to encourage the one, curb the other, keep discipline and conserve time, and thru it all, maintain an ardent and loyal spirit in the convention.

7. *Bringing in the men.*—Just as much of an occasion as possible should be made of the coming in of the men. If all the western men can be gathered at St. Louis and Chicago and brought on from that point in a special car, so much the better. Accommodations should be secured at an official hotel and rooms assigned to the salesmen. They may be met at the train by a delegation of the inside organization and escorted first to the hotel and later to the convention hall.

8. *Entertainment.*—It should be remembered that when men from all over the country are brought into a big city they expect a certain amount of entertainment. This desire on their part should not be opposed but made a valuable part of the convention it-

self. Informal luncheons may be provided for the men on the days of the convention. These should be attended by the principal members of the inside organization, as well as the salesmen. A reception to meet the various executives and department heads and directors of the organization might be arranged. This may be followed by an informal "get together" dinner. A theater party could possibly be planned for the second evening.

Great care should be taken in arranging the entertainment with which the convention is closed on the evening of the last day. It is important that there be an especially strong spirit of good fellowship pervading this feature. This session, usually a banquet, should lead up gradually to a climax of some sort and care should be taken to have the convention break up at the highest point of enthusiasm. Arrangements should have been made to get the men off for their territory immediately. Returning to the office the next day when it has settled back into its every-day routine is depressing, and for the salesman to remain in the city several days on pleasure bent deadens the enthusiasm he has acquired at the convention before he has had a chance to apply it in the field.

9. *Convention hall.*—The convention hall need not be so pretentious as the name would seem to indicate. It should, however, be well ventilated, suitably decorated, and may contain exhibits showing the growth of the business or the making of the product. Just enough chairs should be provided for the number

who will be present. Many empty chairs or a hall that is too large will have a depressing effect.

A stenographic report should be made of the proceedings of all the business sessions. This will be expensive, but it will be well worth while if the convention sticks to the program.

10. *Results of the convention.*—The convention is a combination of work and play. The play should not be allowed to encroach upon the work and there should be snap and enthusiasm in every session. If the convention has been properly handled, it will return its cost many times over in the increased enthusiasm, loyalty and knowledge of the field force, and in the new viewpoint it has given the inside organization. Recruits for the sales force who have had an opportunity to attend the sessions will enter the training class with an unquenchable enthusiasm.

11. *Idealizing the business.*—That methods of cooperating with salesmen and of getting the best out of them such as have been described cost money cannot be denied. But that the money spent is returned many times over is evidenced by the big, rapidly growing concerns from whose experiences these facts and methods have been drawn. In reality, it costs more money to operate a lot of poorly trained men with little or no enthusiasm than it does to handle a well-trained, highly efficient, enthusiastic organization. And it is only by methods such as these that the sales manager can create that united and collective loyalty —loyalty not only to the house, and the ideals behind

it, but loyalty to every other member of the organization outside and inside—commonly known as esprit de corps.

That concern is to be congratulated whose salesmen refer to the house as "ours"—who consider themselves not distinct selling units but members of a big, growing family—who look upon their concern as the ideal of organization, square dealing and efficiency and upon its product as the best of its kind—who feel that their company is performing a highly useful service in the world and that they are privileged in being its representatives—and who, thru this love and regard, cast their lot with the organization not for a day but for years.

This is not an extravagant statement. There are numberless concerns in which such a spirit pervades the selling organization from top to bottom. Few businesses are so big, so successful or so independent, that they would not cease to grow, acquire dry-rot and eventually crumble into decay if such a spirit were wholly lost to their sales forces.

REVIEW

What is your opinion of the advisability of holding a convention annually or otherwise?

What may a convention be expected to accomplish?

Outline a program for an annual convention of the salesmen of your firm.

Discuss the importance of playing up the convention beforehand; plans for bringing the men; looking after details. Holding the convention to the program.

Discuss "Idealizing the business."

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